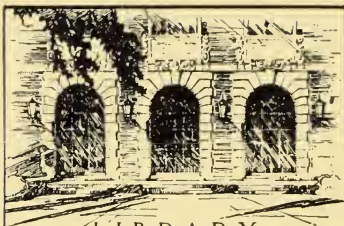


# The Story of Illinois

By

*Theodore Calvin Pease*



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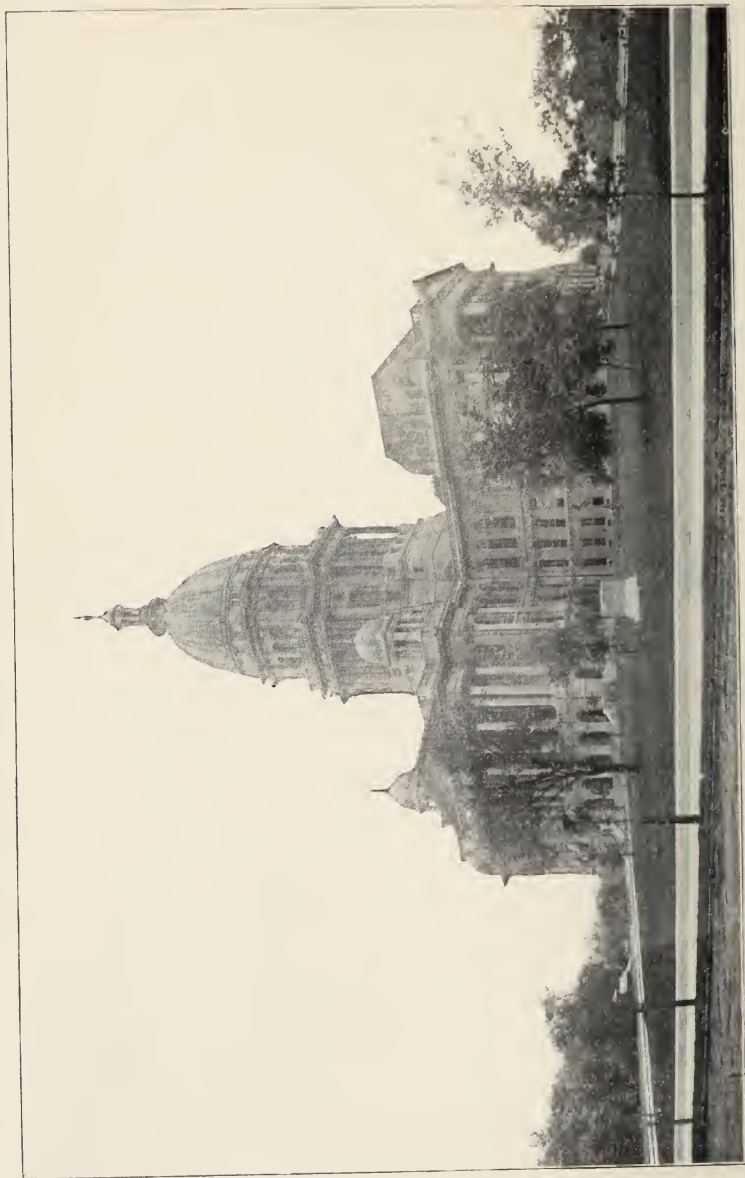
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ILLINOIS STATEHOUSE

# THE STORY OF ILLINOIS

BY  
THEODORE CALVIN PEASE, PH. D.

Author of  
*Vol. II, Centennial History of Illinois*



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To

Dr. Otto Leopold Schmidt





## PREFACE

This volume is an attempt to present a short readable history of the state of Illinois, embodying the results of the latest research. Naturally it is based to a considerable extent on the five volume *Centennial History of Illinois*, but for most of the period covered by the volume the body of source material has been carefully examined. Still, my indebtedness to the other authors of the Centennial History, especially to Professor Clarence W. Alvord, will be apparent to anyone who is acquainted with their work. I have also to express my gratitude to Dr. Otto L. Schmidt for encouragement and kindly criticism.

THEODORE CALVIN PEASE

OCTOBER 8, 1924



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## INTRODUCTION

THE Illinois of the present may be understood only as the product of the past. On the basis of a physical environment made by past geological ages, the state has arisen, an edifice of political, industrial, and social organization, to be comprehended only through a study of the plans and methods by which the successive generations have built it tier by tier. In York Cathedral in England, beneath the present fabric illustrating the successive Gothic styles of four centuries, are shown the crypt of an earlier Norman church and the foundations of a still earlier Saxon one. Similarly the story of Illinois necessarily includes as well the failure of both France and England to solve the problem of empire in the heart of the Mississippi Valley as the final success in the task of the United States.

Nor can our study be confined too closely within the geographical limits of present day Illinois. State boundaries are at best but artificial things, and things of a late day. Frenchman and Englishman, pursuing their imperial ambitions in the Great Valley, did not parcel out their visions according to the limits of our present

## *Introduction*

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may pass it most easily, lying athwart the easiest paths which man may travel from east to west, she and her great market at Chicago stand at the cross roads of world trade such as those which in earlier ages made Vienna, Constantinople, and Damascus. Shaped like a rivet interlocked at the head with the commonwealths of the North her point drives deep into the states of the upper south. In earlier days Tennessean and New Yorker, Virginian and New Englander, Kentuckian and Pennsylvanian here stood face to face and learned by political combat each to know and to respect the other. In later days immigrants of all the races of Europe have met in her borders and have been set to learn the hard lessons of toleration and mutual respect; and amid tumult, disorder and violence, Illinois has pressed on her way in the performance of her political mission in the United States; physically and intellectually in the days of the Civil War and in the days of the World War alike, a bond of union among sections and races.

The geological story of the making of Illinois of today is not for an historian to tell in detail. Sometimes covered with tropical forest, sometimes the bed of a great inland sea, sometimes partly covered with glacial ice caps, till recently the trough by which the Great Lakes flowed to the Mississippi, Illinois at length became what



she was when the white man first looked on her landscape, a land in places level as the bed of a prehistoric lake, elsewhere gently rolling or even hilly, trenched from northeast to southwest by the valley of the Illinois River, crossed in the extreme south by the Ozark Hills but with only a difference of a few hundred feet elevation between her highest and lowest points. Over her surface in places stretched the prairies, their fertile soils throwing up grass as high as the waist of a horseman, bordered with woods along the water courses; in other places were the hills more or less fertile covered by hard wood forest or scrub oak. Beneath her surface lay deposits of lead and other nonprecious metals and vast beds of bituminous coal. On the northeast, west, south, and east she touched navigable waters, and across her flowed many rivers such as the Kaskaskia, the Illinois, the Sangamon, the Embarrass, the Rock, and the Desplaines that in their day served as highways of trade. These are the facts of the physical Illinois that especially concern the student of her history.

Of the races that had lived in her borders before the white man came the historian can say little save that they existed. The great earthworks of the Ohio Valley, such as the Monks Mound of Cahokia and the surrounding mounds have challenged attention from the beginning,

and by their vastness caused men to believe them the work of superior races. Now we know them to be only the work of forerunners of the Indian tribes of later days. Excavation of the mounds reveals a primitive culture, pottery, tools, weapons, ornaments. Male burials with crushed skulls and arrow-pierced ribs; skeletons bearing the mark of syphilitic lesions reveal the tragedies of a thousand years ago. But none of the makers of the mounds has left any system of writing for us to decipher, and their history, guessed at in a few instances, must remain forever unwritten.

Nor do we need to linger over the Indian inhabitants found by the white man in the Illinois country, or to consider them save as the hapless tools and victims of the superior races that marked the region for their own. Of the Indians in general it may be said that they had attained a primitive culture that included a rude agriculture, a rude pottery, a rude weaving, a rude fashioning of weapons from flint. But the Indian was speedily diverted to hunt or to wage war for the white man and to use the white man's kettles, blankets, and firearms; his own culture faded away.

So soon after the coming of the whites were the Indian and his political and social life debased that it is not easy to describe him accurately as he was at that moment. In his villages were

## *Introduction*

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chiefs whose prestige came from their prowess in arms, medicine men whose influence came from their reputed control of the supernatural, and civil chiefs whose authority arose from their ability or descent. In the villages the chiefs exercised little real control over the warriors who lawlessly broke many a solemnly made treaty. Custom was law, and was invoked by individuals, penalties being enforced by the injured man or his kindred with the support of public opinion. Parents exercised little control of their children. After the white man had come, at least, immorality, polygamy and divorce were frequent. Few children were born, and only the hardiest survived the starvation of the hard winter. The Indian population at best was but stationary in a land of plenty where pioneers of the white race were prolific. And by war, by the white men's disease, and above all by the white men's ardent spirits, the god of the white men day by day removed their red opponents from before their faces.

Much has been written about the Indians' belief in a Great Spirit and in a monotheistic religion; but the error has doubtless arisen from the confusion inevitable when one attempts to seek abstract thoughts in a language that has almost no words for them. The Indian appears to have lived in a spiritual anarchy comparable to the political anarchy of his villages; the tree, the

rock, the waterfall, the animal he hunted, even the weapon with which he hunted it, had each its manitou or presiding spirit to be appeased by rites and offerings. The notion of one overruling Great Spirit or Manitou he perhaps borrowed at an early date from the Roman Catholic missionary who threaded the forest to bring him the sacraments of the church for salvation, or from the gentle Moravian who sought to teach him the Christian practice of humility, gentleness and non-resistance.

The enumeration of the Indian tribes of the Illinois is not a matter of importance; those tribes generation by generation changed their habitat. Father Marquette found on the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers the confederated tribes of the Cahokia, Tamaroa, Michigamea, Kaskaskia, Peoria, etc., the group that called themselves the Illinois, or *the men*. Later exploration found the Sac and the Foxes in northwestern Illinois, the Pottawatomie around the foot of Lake Michigan, the Kickapoo in the central prairies, the Shawnee in the southeast. War, famine, the pressure of the dreaded Iroquois, the influence of French commanders anxious to group the Indians for military use, made incessant changes in the hunting grounds of the tribes. The reader will forgive the omission of details that would only weary him.



# THE STORY OF ILLINOIS



# The Story of Illinois

## CHAPTER I

### THE FRENCH REGIME

THE coming of white men to the northwest and to Illinois turns on a succession of motives; the search for a route to the western sea; the fur trade; the christianization of the Indians; the founding of commercial and military empires; the search for homes. All of these in their order influenced the French and English as in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries they approached the Illinois country.

The appearance of the first Frenchman in the west is but a phase of the age-long search for trade-routes from Europe to the riches of the far east. That trade was old at the beginning of the Christian Era, when bales of Chinese silks intended to be worn by Roman ladies were lost in the great deserts of Central Asia, to be preserved in the sands, and recovered in our own day. In the fifteenth century it was the aspiration of the European nations that fronted the Atlantic to find a route for that trade by sea that perhaps



sent Columbus on the famous voyage to the west, and certainly sent Vasco da Gama around the Cape of Good Hope.

Early in the sixteenth century men finally recognized the fact that to the south the New World barred the way to Cathay; and after 1540 the Spaniards knew well enough the span of the North American continent. But the search for the Northwest Passage, for the way to China through the Arctic regions, is one that has engrossed men's minds even to the present when Mr. Stefansson proposes a route by submarine liners under the polar ice cap. In the early seventeenth century the same dream set Captain John Smith to exploring the upper reaches of the Virginia rivers for a route to China. In 1634 it sent Jean Nicolet, despatched by Champlain from the struggling little French colony on the rock of Quebec, to the shores of Green Bay dressed in "a grand robe of China damask, all strewn with flowers and birds of many colors,"—perhaps that he might make with due *éclat* his entry into the capital of the Great Khan.<sup>1</sup>

"If he had voyaged three days more on a great river which issues from this lake, he would have reached the sea."<sup>2</sup> Such was Nicolet's later report of his achievement; based on information

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<sup>1</sup> Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, XXIII, 279.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, XVIII, 236.

obtained in the partially understood language of the savages among whom he was. Its ambiguity is provoking. The sea may be the "Big Water" of the Indians, the Mississippi; Nicolet may have failed to understand his hosts as saying that three days off was a stream that would lead to it; but at all events the phrase shows how present in men's thoughts was the western sea.

Nicolet's discoveries were not followed up for twenty years. The scourge of the Iroquois fell heavily upon the struggling colony of New France. Their confederation in which the fraternal clans of the same totem throughout the five tribes linked the whole in close alliance was famous for prowess and savagery in war. The Jesuits, strong in unquestioning military obedience to superiors, in the education, the devotion, and the intelligence of their fathers had aspired to do in New France what they had done in Paraguay; to gather round Jesuit priests villages of Indians to be instructed in the faith, and to be made adept and obedient pupils of their spiritual guides alike in the concerns of war and peace. Their work had begun among the Hurons, when in 1648 and 1649 the Iroquois fell upon their villages and amid their slaughtered converts Jesuit fathers gained the crown of martyrdom. The remnant of the Hurons fled from the eastern shore of their lake to the forests beyond Superior,

and here the Jesuits were to follow them. First at La Pointe on Lake Superior and then at Green Bay, Jesuit missionaries established themselves in the west.

Even before the Jesuit the fur-trader had penetrated to the west. In the northern parts of America the white pioneers sought in vain for the pearls and precious metals that enriched the Spaniards in the south; but early in the seventeenth century they had discovered a source of wealth in the fur bearing animals. The trade in furs, though small if judged by modern standards, speedily became one of the important branches of international trade. Amsterdam became a great fur market, supplying western Europe and distant Russia. Most important in the trade was the pelt of the beaver or castor, as the French called him; both his names came to be English cant synonyms for hat; and the manufacture developed in both France and England. In America the demands of the trade forced the Indians to become the white man's hunters, abandoning the practice of their primitive domestic arts in order to purchase with furs the white man's blankets, textiles, kettles, guns, ornaments, and above all his fire water, whether Dutch gin, English rum, French brandy, or American whisky. At some time between 1654 and 1663 Radisson and Groseilliers had journeyed far into the Northwest, perhaps even to



STATUE OF MARQUETTE  
Marquette, Michigan



the Mississippi, in search of furs. Their presence antedated even that of the Jesuit.

Both Jesuit and fur trader found their place in the new imperialism developing in France with the accession to power in 1660 of Louis XIV. Colbert, Louis' great minister of finance, had imbibed the mercantilist idea of the value of colonies in making the mother country strong and self-sufficing, and his policy looked to strengthening the colony of Canada and extending its bounds and trade. The exponents of his policy in Canada were the Intendant, Jean Talon, and after 1672 the Governor Louis de Buade, Comte de Frontenac. Troops were sent to Canada in sufficient force to inspire the Iroquois with respect and produce a peace in 1667. In a great military ceremony at Sault Ste. Marie in 1671, St. Luson took possession of the west in the name of Louis XIV. Where Jesuit and trader had come before by sufferance of the Indians the imperialist followed secure in armed might.

In extension of this policy, Louis Joliet, already explorer of Lake Erie, was sent in 1673, accompanied by the Jesuit Father Jacques Marquette to search out the Mississippi River. Reaching it by the Fox-Wisconsin portage they floated down as far as the Arkansas country. Having determined that the river must flow into the Gulf of Mexico, and fearing capture by the

Spaniards if they kept on, they turned back. They passed up the Illinois on their return where Joliet, wiser than many a man of later day, noted the richness of the prairie soil and the fact that no trees barred the farmer's access to it; they passed the portage to the Chicago River where Joliet again anticipated later ages by pointing out the possibility and advantage of a canal. As Joliet's journal was lost when his canoe was over-set near Montreal our main source for the expedition is the journal of Father Marquette, whose life is almost the epic of Catholic Christianity in America.

The moving impulse of Marquette's life was his devotion to the Virgin, and his desire to bring the knowledge of her intercession to men who lived in darkness. For this he had become a missionary; for this he had embarked on the voyage, and for this he promised the confederation of the Illinois that he would return and establish a mission among them. Returning in the late autumn of 1674 in spite of the fact that death had already marked him, he spent the winter in a hut near the Chicago portage, racked by illness, ministered to by his two companions, by neighboring fur traders, and by the Indians. In the spring, rallying his last strength, he proceeded down the Illinois as far as the villages of his friends to preach the gospel to them.



Above all he preached to them Jesus Christ on the very eve (of that great day) that He died upon the cross for them as well as for all the rest of mankind; then he said holy mass. Three days later on Easter Sunday things being prepared in the same manner as on the Thursday, he celebrated the holy mysteries for the second time. And by these two sacrifices—the first ever offered thus to God, he took possession of that land in the name of Jesus Christ, and gave to that mission the name of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin.<sup>1</sup>

His mission thus founded he regarded his life's work as accomplished. He set out on his return to the mission at Mackinac, growing weaker day by day till finally at the Marquette River he died the death of a saint, "dying as the apostle of the Indians in a wretched cabin on the shore of lake Illinois, forsaken by all the world."<sup>2</sup>

As lonely in his life as was Marquette in his death, but differing from him in all else but resolution and greatness of soul was his successor in the story of Illinois, the imperialist Robert Cavelier, Sieur de La Salle. Born in 1643, he had been in youth the pupil of the Jesuits; but La Salle's was not the metal to be tempered in that forge, and to the end he hated his old masters. He had come to New France in 1666, obtaining near Montreal a grant of land, soon

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<sup>1</sup> Thwaites, *Jesuit Relations*, LIX, 188-190.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, LIX, 206.



called probably in derision of him because he was always dreaming of a route to the Far East, La Chine—China. In 1674 with the favor of Governor Frontenac he had acquired Fort Frontenac on Lake Ontario, and an opportunity of growing rich from the fur trade. But the paradox of fate had made this man who could not keep accounts a dreamer of vast empires, based on trade, in the western wilderness; had destined a reserved haughty man capable of winning the loyalty only of the finest characters among his followers to a great task of exploration and colonization. A will of tempered steel drove him on at his task in spite of foreclosures by his creditors, the sinking of his ships, repeated mutinies and desertions, and above all that brute, inert, cruel opponent, the American wilderness, terrible in its forests and morasses, its treacherous lakes and rivers and its winter snows. Counting three failures for every success, by the day in 1687 when he fell by the hands of mutinous followers, he had done his work; he had laid in the Illinois the foundations of a French colony.

Briefly stated his project was to establish posts to the south of the Great Lakes to link the fur trade of the region to Fort Frontenac, and to hold the Mississippi River as a second great trade outlet from the interior to the ocean. Late in 1679 by way of Lake Michigan and the St.

Joseph River, where he built a fort, he found his way to the Illinois country. In January of 1680 he built Fort Crèvecoeur at the Lake of Peoria among the Illinois tribes. The loss of his vessel, the *Griffon*, on the Great Lakes, and the attachment of his property in Canada by his creditors compelled him to return, leaving in command his trusted lieutenant, Henri de Tonti. In his absence happened one of the great tragedies of primitive Indian history.

The Iroquois were sufficiently advanced in the arts of trade to recognize the advantage of acting as middlemen in the fur trade between the western Indians and the Dutch and English at Albany. The likelihood of that trade being diverted elsewhere by La Salle they did not like; and in the summer of 1680 their war parties appeared before the great Illinois village on the river of that name, probably where the little hamlet of Utica stands today. Tonti, already deserted by most of La Salle's followers, used every means that his dauntless spirit could devise to overcome the Iroquois by the fear of the French and save the Illinois from their tomahawks. The fears of the Iroquois, however, served only to save the lives of Tonti and his few men. The Iroquois dogged the Illinois on their flight down the river, and when the Tamaroa did not follow the other tribes across the Mississippi, drove off their warriors and

slew their women and children by torture. Once more an essential part of La Salle's great edifice had collapsed; but once more he took up the task of replacing it.

In the winter of 1681-2 he returned to the Illinois with new resources and early in the spring descended the Mississippi to its mouth, on April 9, 1682, formally taking possession of the river and all the territory it drained in the name of Louis XIV. Returning to the Illinois River he began a new fort at Starved Rock, (Crèvecoeur had been burned by the mutineers of 1680) calling it Fort St. Louis. Around it he gathered the Indian tribes for mutual protection till he had nearly four thousand warriors, too large a force for any Iroquois war party to overcome. In March of 1684 under Tonti the fort beat off an Iroquois attack.

Once more La Salle's project was threatened with destruction, this time at the hands of the new governor of Canada, La Barre. Desirous of undoing the work of his predecessors, Frontenac and La Salle, La Barre took over La Salle's posts including Fort St. Louis. In a vain search for justice in Canada, La Salle left the Illinois forever. Passing on to France he secured the favor of Louis XIV, obtaining not merely the return of his posts, but also royal aid in the establishment of a colony at the mouth of the Mississippi. His

expedition missed the mouth of the river and was landed four hundred miles to the west, at Matagorda Bay. Setting out in 1687 overland to the Illinois in a desperate attempt to reach Tonti and bring reinforcements for his colony he was murdered by mutinous followers. Some of his men made their way to the Illinois, and the Indians forestalled the Spaniards in accounting for the rest of his colony.

But if La Salle was gone, Tonti and his colony in Illinois were left. On hearing of La Salle's death a year after it occurred he descended the Mississippi in a vain attempt to rescue the Texas colony. In 1690 he with La Forest, another of La Salle's followers, was granted all La Salle's rights in the Illinois. Fort St. Louis was moved to the neighborhood of Lake Peoria once more, and subsidiary posts appeared at Maraméc on the Fox River, and at Chicago.

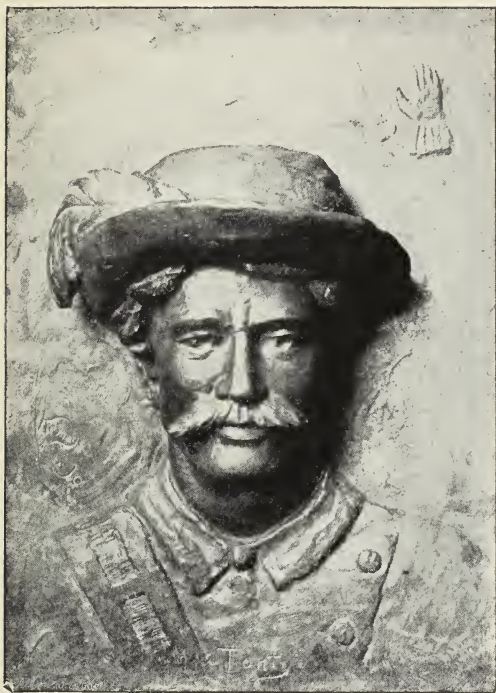
The Jesuit influence now turned the scale against the imperialists. La Salle had always hated the Jesuits, believing they had carried their opposition to him even to the point of stirring up the Iroquois against him. The Jesuits on their part disliked the whole imperial scheme of La Salle. Their enemies maintained that they wished to keep traders out of the west in order themselves to enjoy a monopoly of trade; but such a motive is not necessary to explain why men

engaged in christianizing the Indians should oppose the introduction of brandy into their villages; for, perhaps because they lacked the white man's partial immunity gained by hereditary use, strong waters literally turned the Indians to beasts. The Montreal traders who suspected that, in spite of royal prohibitions, La Salle's establishments in the west bought furs that otherwise would have come to Montreal added their complaints to those of the Jesuits. The Jesuit influence through the pious Madame de Maintenon, privately married to Louis XIV, prevailed on the king. Partly on the ground of the preservation of the Indians, partly on the ground that the fur trade of the West was not worth the wars and military preparations it cost, in 1696 an edict was issued barring all traders from the West. Henceforth the Indians must bring their furs to Montreal to trade under supervision of the authorities. Tonti and La Forest might retain their post but must not trade in beaver.

In spite of this prohibition the Illinois posts survived. Tonti was removed by death at Mobile in 1704; after that year La Forest was not in the Illinois.<sup>1</sup> But the missions were developing.

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<sup>1</sup> The terms "The Illinois" and "the Illinois Country" are used here and hereafter in the loose sense which they retained till the nineteenth century, referring to settlements scattered from the banks of the Mississippi and the lower Ohio to the Great Lakes. In using the terms, men ordinarily did not think of any exact boundaries.



HENRI DE TONTY

From Bas-Relief in Marquette Building, Chicago





Father Claude Allouez had carried on the work of Marquette till his death in 1689. Father Jacques Gravier succeeded him, laboring till 1705. For a few years after 1696 the mission station of the Guardian Angel stood at Chicago. In 1699 the Seminary for Foreign Missions established a mission to the Tamaroa at Cahokia in the American Bottom. After a controversy with the Jesuits it was decided finally that the Seminary was to retain its station, and the Jesuits were to control the rest of the Illinois field. In 1700 they had moved Marquette's Mission of the Immaculate Conception to Kaskaskia. Settlement in the Illinois was shifting toward the place at which it was to rest for a century and more—the rich bottom lands of the east side of the Mississippi below the mouth of the Missouri—the American Bottom of later pioneer parlance. This result was due to the fact that La Salle's plan for the occupation of the mouth of the Mississippi had at last been accomplished. In 1699 the Sieur d'Iberville had founded Biloxi; and he looked for a reorganization of trade around the new colony, and proposed a regrouping of Indian tribes in the upper country for defense. Accordingly he brought the Illinois tribes to the Mississippi to link them closer to Louisiana. In 1702 he projected a post near the mouth of the Tennessee to shut out the English; one was established near the



present site of Cairo; it lasted but a year or two.

For the Illinois settlement thus relocated for strategic and commercial purposes there followed years of slow growth, transmuting trading posts into frontier villages. *Coueurs de bois* married squaws and became domestic; families of settlers found their way out. In one way or another Illinois held its own during the critical years of the war of the Spanish Succession, 1702-1713. The trading restrictions had always been hard to enforce on the lawless men of the wilderness. The Indians had never liked the requirement that they carry furs to Montreal or the prohibition of the trade in brandy; and in the stress of war, to keep them away from English influence, violations of the edict on the part of French traders had been winked at. With 1714 the policy was practically abandoned. Then a Scotch adventurer, John Law, of Lauriston, came to Paris with the project of an imperial speculation; a great bank in Paris rejuvenating the finances with paper money, and a vast trading and colonizing enterprise in the Mississippi Valley to give that paper money validity.<sup>1</sup> Even the early eighteenth century knew something of advertising and Law's glowing prospectuses of squaws weaving silks, of a land flow-

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<sup>1</sup> Crozat's trading charter of 1712 did not cover Illinois. It included only Louisiana, and at that date the boundary of Louisiana was the Ohio River.

ing with milk and honey, out of whose hills might be dug, if not brass, at least gold and silver, drew men's attention to the Great Valley; even drew colonists into it. When the crash of the scheme came in 1720 the awakened interest of France in the Illinois and her enlarged settlements were intangible assets with real value.

With the year 1721 came a reorganization of French dominions in America. Louisiana was laid off into districts; two of them, Arkansas and Illinois were united in the commandery of Illinois. In it a court was established in 1722. In 1720 Philippe Renault had come to Illinois in search of mines. That same year Fort de Chartres was begun; rebuilt in 1753 as the Louisbourg of the west, it was continued on a site which the English later condemned as dictated by the pecuniary interests of its builders rather than its command of the Mississippi River. The interminable succession of battles and campaigns drags on from 1712 in the Fox war, a struggle between the Foxes and the French and their Indian allies. Outlying settlements grew up: Ouiatenon near the present site of Lafayette, Indiana, in 1720, Vincennes in 1731. In that year the control of the Company of the Indies, the successor of Law's enterprise, came to an end; and throughout the remainder of the French regime Illinois was governed by the king.

The history of the Illinois till 1765 must thenceforth be a recital of the names of the intendants and commandants who ruled in the Illinois, and of the Jesuits and seminary priests who labored there. One romantic name stands out, that of Pierre Dartaguiette, the brave young commandant in the Illinois from 1733 to 1736. His end was tragic. In 1736 he led an expedition down the Mississippi to cooperate with the governor of Louisiana in an attack on the Indians of the Southwest who under the influence of English traders among them attacked the French convoys on the river. The conjunction of the French forces was never made, the Indians, under the guidance of the English defeating both expeditions in detail. Dartaguiette was captured at the defeat of the Chickasaw Bluffs, and perished at the stake, singing his death song undaunted by the fire.

The settlement in the Illinois country was never very large. It numbered perhaps 2,000 French and negroes at the most, scattered mainly in the little villages of Kaskaskia, Prairie du Rocher, St. Philips, Fort de Chartres, and Cahokia. Yet in the fertile lands of the American Bottom this little population raised grain that supplied not merely the later posts on the Ohio, but Louisiana and New Orleans as well. Where wealth such as this existed commerce flourished. The fur trade was mainly carried on by way of the Missouri

River, furs being shipped out by way of Canada. In the government of the colony the French authorities applied their favorite principle of check and govern; against the authority of the commandant they balanced that of the civil and criminal judge or intendant, representative of the finance department. Lesser figures were the store keeper and the notary, an official whose records included legal instruments, deeds, agreements, marriage contracts and wills. A degree of self government in village concerns devolved upon the inhabitants of the villages who elected officials to attend to local affairs. The villages had their common fields administered in common; otherwise land was held by various tenures, some of them feudal but none of them oppressive. As in Canada the holdings took the form of ribbons of land running back from a narrow river frontage.

Externally an Illinois village of the French regime represented various classes and standards of life. There was a sprinkling of nobles and bourgeois, the officials and well-to-do traders, living as close to the fashions of Versailles as three thousand miles of sea and one thousand of wilderness would let them, their houses garnished with good furniture and plate. There were the habitants, illiterate, simple, light-hearted folk ready always for dance or frolic, taking not too much thought for the morrow, and not cleaning

their homes too carefully. "For clothing, the cotton plant furnished its fibre, and the warm Mackinaw blanket the indispensable *capot*, with a blue cloth hood for 'winter wear,' and the skins of the deer dressed in the Indian manner for trousers and moccasins. Thus appareled, and with a short clay pipe burnt to an ebony color by constant use, wending his way to gossip with his neighbor, or by his own ingenuity, you have a picture of a colonial subject of the 'Grand Monarque.'" <sup>1</sup> The lawless *coureur de bois* is always in the background, and the negro. One man in 1765 owned no less than eighty negro slaves. Around the settlements was a fringe of Indians, half-civilized and half-christianized by the Jesuit fathers, and wholly decadent.

With the middle of the eighteenth century came the crisis of the struggle between Great Britain and France for the control of the Ohio Valley. The part of the English in western exploration, not so well known as that of the French, is equally daring. At point after point French and English came in rivalry from the first.

Soon after they had explored the North for France, Radisson and Groseilliers went over to the English service and taught their new masters of the rich fur trade that could be made tributary

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<sup>1</sup> Breese, *Early History of Illinois*, 198.

to Hudson Bay. English ships could enter it, and tied up to wharves in its harbors, exchange goods for furs far cheaper than could the French, obliged to carry their merchandise over a thousand miles of lakes, rivers and portages. The French seized the Hudson Bay posts in 1686, and maintained partial possession for almost thirty years, but the Hudson Bay Company by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 was restored to its rights.

Barely had St. Luson raised the lilies of France at Sault Ste. Marie on the western edge of the Great Lakes Basin, when Batts and Fallam, adventurous Virginia explorers, passed the heights of the Blue Ridge and on the New River reached westward flowing waters, finding by their way evidence that other and unknown Englishmen had preceded them. By the latter part of the seventeenth century, Virginia pack trains were seeking the fur trade of the interior with the southern Indians by way of the defiles of the French Broad and the Little Tennessee, and around the southern end of the Appalachian barrier in the present state of Georgia. A letter left by Father Marquette in 1673 on the lower Mississippi to be delivered to some Spanish priest to the south found its way ultimately to William Byrd of Virginia; how we can only conjecture. By the beginning of the eighteenth century the English had passed down the Tennessee to its mouth and had crossed



the Mississippi to the Arkansas country. They were only months behind the French in reaching to seize the mouth of the Mississippi. Fifteen years before under the protection of the Iroquois their traders had ventured on the Great Lakes from Albany as far as Mackinac. The French in the west felt themselves beset; at all events they strove to make the home government think they were.

The pressure of the English and the hostility of Indian tribes had caused the French to pay but little attention to the upper Ohio country before the forties. Their fur trade had lain across the Mississippi; they were concerned more immediately in making sure of their communication with New Orleans by way of the Mississippi, and with Canada by way of the upper Wabash and Maumee and by the Chicago and St. Joseph portages to Lake Michigan. Accordingly about 1740 English trading posts began to spring up in the present state of Ohio; and the French feared in King George's War (1744-48) that the influence of English traders on the Indians might rouse them to a general massacre in the Illinois. The French occupation under Cèloron de Blainville of the portages from Lake Erie to the Forks of the Ohio was a desperate attempt to block off the English from the Great Valley. Their clash with the Ohio Company of Virginia land speculators

and George Washington and the outbreak in 1754 of the French and Indian War are a part of the nation's history.

In that war Illinois had but a minor part to play. From the wheat fields of the American Bottom it supplied the French garrisons with food. It sent military contingents to the Forks of the Ohio that participated in the actions of 1754 to 1758. It saw a fort, often incorrectly called Fort Gage,<sup>1</sup> built at Kaskaskia in 1759, and Fort Massiac built opposite the mouth of the Tennessee two years earlier. Its garrisons took part in one or two later campaigns in the main seats of war; but there the story ends. The military decisions in the war of 1756-1763 were to come in fields remote from Illinois; at Louisbourg, at the Forks of the Ohio, on the Plains of Abraham; and when the Treaty of Paris in 1763 ceded to England all France had claimed east of the Mississippi save New Orleans, for two years the French garrisons held the Illinois till Pontiac's rebellion had subsided, and the English troops could make their way to Fort Chartres and take possession.

So passed the French regime in Illinois. It had begun in the militant dreams of imperial trade expansion, and the conversion of the Indians; and

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<sup>1</sup> This fort was on the bluffs above the town. Fort Gage was the name given to the Jesuits' house in Kaskaskia, when used as a fort by the British.



it had failed. France, unlike England, had resolved to exclude from her colony religious dissent; and the Huguenot elements that might have built her an empire overseas built one for England instead. Her policy of restriction and regulation had allured but a few hundreds and thousands of docile Frenchmen to filter into the west to hold it against the onward rush of the English millions. The few hundreds of French inhabitants remained clinging to their old customs and speech till submerged in the vast tide of emigration that brought men of other European races to Illinois by the hundred thousand and the million. Of material results of the French regime it is vain to inquire; a few oddly shaped land holdings, a few peculiar titles to be fitted into a world of township surveys, and Anglo Saxon land laws; a few names of places. In spiritual results the contribution is far richer; it has thrown a gleam of the romance and chivalry of old France across the page of Illinois history in the engaging figures of Dartaguiette and the loyal Tonti; above all it has left to all time the two ideal figures of the missionary and the explorer, the saintly Marquette and the heroic La Salle.

## CHAPTER II

### THE DAY OF THE BRITON

**T**O THE French regime in Illinois succeeded the English. From the year 1763 when the English acquired title to the French territory east of the Mississippi to the outbreak of the American Revolution, Great Britain faced the problem of organizing the Illinois country and her other American acquisitions, and of coordinating them in the empire which the war of 1754-1763 had thrust upon her hands. For the British empire did not begin with a far flung plan of imperial dominion; it was a casual growth. English traders had traded in India and the exigencies of trade forced them to govern the people with whom they traded. English colonies had grown up on the Atlantic seaboard largely through the salutary neglect of the mother country and had committed England to an American war in which France was driven from the continent. The problem of forming an imperial system out of these accidental beginnings in 1763 was indeed a great one. To enlarge a little island's government, gnarled and twisted with centuries of constitutional quibbles and compromises till it might serve

also as the government of some three million Englishmen, Scotchmen, Irishmen, Germans, and French on the Atlantic seaboard; to regulate through it the inevitable displacement of the Indian by the expansion of the whites; to extend it over a trading corporation such as the East India Company, fast acquiring dominions in India, larger, more populous, perhaps more wealthy than England herself, and insure that the corporation should not itself corrupt English politics; to extend an imperial order alike over the primitive barbarism of the American Indian, and the ancient civilization of the Hindu; in short to unite the North American wilderness, the seaboard colonies, the sugar islands, the African slave coast and India into an empire in which all should contribute justly to the common defense; here was the problem of England in 1763. Her attempts to solve it are written in many places; in the projects of legislation for the East India Company, in the parliamentary independence for a time bestowed on Ireland, in the measures of taxation that produced the American Revolution, and lastly in the abortive attempts from 1763 to 1774 to evolve a policy for the West.

The failure of England to solve her problem is to be traced to the character of the English government of the eighteenth century. The revolution of the seventeenth century ostensibly trans-



STATUE OF LA SALLE  
Lincoln Park, Chicago



ferring control from the crown to the parliament had really transferred it from the king to the great landholders. Representation of the House of Commons was in no sense equally proportioned. Great cities had no representatives or at best but two or four, while medieval towns that had long since turned to sheep walks or sunk beneath the North Sea had their members duly nominated by some local landholder; and in many a little village the ownership of a few houses or a few acres of land conferred on the holder the right to name two members in the most august legislative assembly in the world. From the time when the rising importance of the House of Commons became apparent, great nobles and great landholders had been consolidating their control of the boroughs that sent members to Parliament. Cliques based on family relationship or political alliances pooled their holdings in the House of Commons, and made or unmade ministries by giving or withholding the support of their votes in the House. Party government, as we understand it, was nonexistent; the art of constituting a ministry lay in gaining the support of a sufficient number of aristocratic factions to secure majorities in Lords and Commons. The policies of ministries so constituted, on the west as on every other subject were in continual fluctuation.

Many interests awaited with impatience the de-

cisions the ministry must make as to the disposal of the new domain. Land speculation had been a mania in Virginia for a century and a quarter. Virginia gentlemen of influence had secured larger and larger grants till the good lands of Virginia were spent, and they looked with longing eyes to the rich land beyond the mountains. Already in 1748 the Ohio Company had received a grant on the upper Ohio; but the French and Indian War had hindered its exploitation. Pennsylvania speculators were as acute and as determined to forestall their Virginia rivals; it was a saying that every great fortune made in the province within fifty years had been made in land. The sea to sea charter claims of Connecticut and Massachusetts cut belts across the new West. On every side were men eager that the government permit them to go up and possess it; on every side, even highly placed in England, were men who owned land elsewhere, in Ireland, on the Atlantic seaboard, in Florida, which they feared would be depopulated or settled slowly, were the new lands opened to settlement. Beneath the aristocratic speculators fretted the mass of frontiersmen, eager to sweep over the new paradise in spite of the Indians. In deciding on its policy of settlement in the West and in pursuing it the British ministry had need of firmness.

The problem of trade offered as much diffi-



culty. It was estimated that the fur trade formerly tributary to Montreal was worth £135,000 a year. The English traders in the back country, men who could not be controlled, whose cheating and abuse of the Indians often foiled the best endeavors of the Indian agents to keep them loyal to the British, might lick their lips at the thought of this prize. Other fur trading interests at home, such as the Hudson Bay Company, powerful in back stairs influence in politics had no desire to see English rivals master this trade. In later years a group of Scotch merchants took over the Montreal trade and found kindly Scots at home to defeat measures that threatened their control of it. As many economic interests were arrayed on either side of the trade question as on that of the land.

Indeed the influences bearing upon the ministry had made it hesitate when terms of peace were first debated, whether to ask for Canada or for Guadeloupe, a French sugar island of the West Indies. In the debate waged in the pamphlet press over the question, it had been pointed out that the freeing of the seaboard colonies from the fear of Canada might encourage them to strike for their independence; that tropical products such as sugar were more valuable to England's trade than those of the temperate zone which would compete with her own produce. Opinion differed as



to whether acquiring the West and allowing the colonies to expand into it would hasten the day of their independence by increasing their strength, or retard it by thinning their population and postponing the time when their manufactures would compete with Great Britain's. The advocates of Canada had their way in the peace. Thenceforth they were politically bound to prove the usefulness of their trophy, as those who had opposed it, such as the faction of the Old Whigs were naturally inclined to point with satisfaction to every proof that the exploiting of their opponent's acquisition was not worth the cost.

The expansionist groups were in control of the ministry at the treaty of peace; and the young Earl of Shelburne, President of the Board of Trade, began to develop a colonial policy. Already it had been decided to maintain a force of twenty battalions of regular troops in the colonies, to garrison the interior, and to draw a line between the possessions of the whites and the Indians beyond which purchases were to be made only by imperial authority, when in the late summer of 1763 the news of Pontiac's insurrection reached London. Pontiac, an Ottawa chief, dismayed at seeing the French replaced by the English on the west and outraged by the rapacity of the lawless English traders, and the encroachments of the white settlers, had formed a con-

federacy of Indian tribes and lifted the tomahawk. The Indian agents were powerless to check the uprising. Every British garrison in the West save Detroit, Niagara and Fort Pitt fell into the hands of the Indians, and a long and costly Indian war seemed the only alternative to a speedy reassurement and conciliation of the Indians by imperial authority.

To bring this about the famous Proclamation of October 7, 1763, was issued. "A very silly proclamation it was," exclaimed one of the men responsible for it, in a moment of candor years later.<sup>1</sup> Before its preparation was completed Shelburne, owing to a factional upheaval, had left office; it passed through the hands of his successor, the Earl of Hillsborough, accumulating divers blunders on its way. Intentionally it set the crest of the mountains as the limit of settlement, thereby for the time being shutting off the older colonies from the newer West. In enumerating other colonies, East and West Florida, Nova Scotia, and Quebec, to which population was to be invited to flow, it specified among their advantages English law and English government, thereby at a stroke of the pen depriving the French inhabitants of Canada of the law by which their lands and lives were secured, and imposing

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Chancellor Northington. Alvord, *Mississippi Valley in British Politics*, I, 264.

on them a representative government from which religious tests barred them. Eleven years passed before this injustice was undone.

A second step of imperial policy taken under the new British ministry, made up of an alliance of the Grenville and Bedford political factions, was the organization of an Indian Department. Since 1755 there had been Indian superintendencies North and South, the first under the famous Sir William Johnson, supervising more or less under the control of the military department all dealings with the Indians, issuing presents to them and otherwise working to conciliate them. The organization was now enlarged and elaborated. Representatives of the superintendencies were lodged with every tribe, and all trade with the Indians was to take place at fixed posts, under licenses issued by the superintendents. To carry out the new Indian policy and to provide military support for it, money was necessary; and the Stamp Act was passed to secure from the colonies their share of it. Their vociferous protest at being obliged to pay for an imperial policy they had not approved, and at being committed to subordination to the imperial authority of the British parliament in taxation, helped to drive the Grenville-Bedfords out of office.

The Duke of Bedford had been the negotiator of the Treaty of 1763 and he and his followers

were therefore necessarily imperialists; but the succeeding ministry, the Old Whigs, was made up of opponents of the treaty of peace who so far as the West was concerned were probably anti-imperialist. They were great favorers of vested and corporate interests and thus inclined to sympathize with the outcry of the colonies as corporations against encroachment on their privileges by the Stamp Act; hence they repealed it. They went out of office in 1766 before they had time to formulate a western policy; but it is not improbable that they would have withdrawn Indian superintendents, traders, and soldiers alike and shutting the door on westward expansion have sought to preserve the West to all time as an Indian reservation.

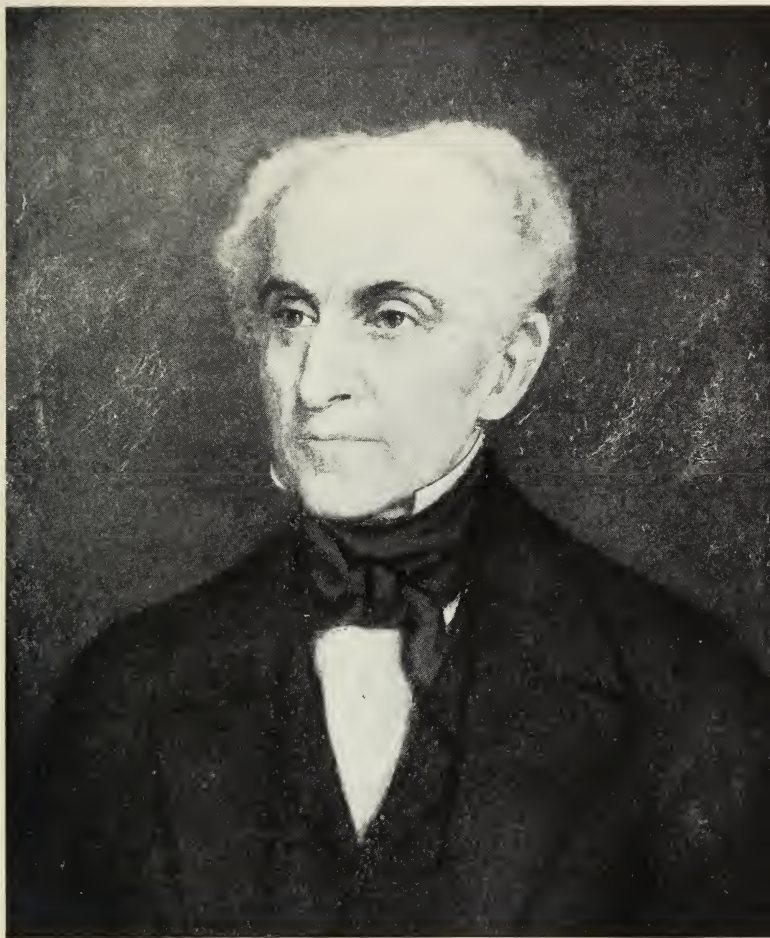
The most promising attempt was now to be made to reach a real solution of the western problem. William Pitt, the war minister who in the Seven Years War had won England her imperial rank, whose greatness in English politics depended on force of character rather than the number of his henchmen in parliament, by the king's command sought to gather a ministry undominated by factions that would seek to solve in terms of the public good the problem of the West, the problem of the East India Company and the problem of governmental reorganizations. To formulate a broad western policy he

summoned to the office of secretary of state for the southern department the Earl of Shelburne.

The three years that had passed since 1763 had given an opportunity for the testing by actual facts of the theories of the earlier period. The unhappy plight in which the Proclamation of 1763 had put the French Canadians was long since apparent. The Indian Department had duly gone into operation; it was submitting most astounding bills for presents made to the Indians. Especially generous were those which Commissary Edward Cole was sending from the Illinois, where at last the English had arrived. George Croghan, ablest of Indian diplomatists, and the trusted assistant of Sir William Johnson in the summer of 1765 had completed the pacification of the Indians of the Wabash country; and on October 9, 1765, Captain Thomas Stirling with one hundred men of the Black Watch or 42d Highlanders who had descended the Ohio from Fort Pitt, relieved the French garrison at Fort de Chartres.

Almost immediately it became apparent that the fur trade of the West was a negligible asset to British merchants. The news of the cession of Illinois to the English had been followed by a migration of many of the wealthier French inhabitants across the river to the new villages of Ste. Genevieve and St. Louis, the latter founded





*Edward Coles*

[From original owned by Chicago Historical Society]

(1786 - 1868)



by Pierre Laclede in 1764. "He appears" wrote Captain Gordon in 1766, "to be sensible, clever & has been very well educated; is very active, and will give us some Trouble before we get the Parts of this Trade that belong to us out of His Hands."<sup>1</sup> From its beginning St. Louis dominated southern Illinois. French traders roamed at large, on the British side of the Mississippi where no British trader dare set his foot outside the protection of the posts, even though he chafed at the regulation of the Indian Department that confined him to them. Under Laclede's guidance the fur trade flowed down the Mississippi to Spanish New Orleans, whose control of the river from the east bank, men were repeatedly to bewail in later years. Was the limited trade in the West worth the amount it cost to regulate it?

Further, Shelburne was made aware of the existence of numerous colonizing projects based on purchases, grants, or hoped for grants in the Ohio and Mississippi Valleys. Virginia projectors, Pennsylvania projectors, Connecticut projectors crowded in, each with his map and his smoothly written prospectus, each pointing out that his western colony would enable the forts to be cheaply rationed and would serve as a bulwark to hold the country for England. These projects, many of them dating from before the treaty of

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<sup>1</sup> *The New Regime*. C. W. Alvord and C. E. Carter, p. 300.



peace had been checked temporarily by the Proclamation of 1763, but now took on new vigor.

Shelburne, as he conscientiously studied in every possible detail the complex problem before him, tended toward certain conclusions derived in large part from the *laissez faire* economics he had imbibed from Doctor Adam Smith, later author of the *Wealth of Nations*. Believing that human legislation could not permanently alter the trend of economic events, he regarded it as a vain endeavor to seek to chain the Indian trade by distant imperial regulations or to dam up the inevitable flow of settlement over the West. To him the only possible course was to return the Indian trade to the colonies for such regulation as it was to have; the westward movement might be rendered as little harmful to the Indians as possible by establishing new colonies in the West under imperial auspices, but with almost complete democratic self-government, their expenses to be paid by quitrents exacted on all grants of land by the British government. The very policy of expansion, that, formulated by the United States in the Northwest Ordinance, was to cover the wilderness with sovereign states on an equality with the original thirteen was already hovering in Shelburne's mind.

Only the preliminaries of his plan were worked out. The illness of the great William Pitt, now

Earl of Chatham, had fatally weakened his ministry; the nominal second in command, the Duke of Grafton, was an easy-going nobleman not too fond of Shelburne: "The duke of Grafton" so Junius pilloried him to eternity, "has always some excellent reason for deserting his friends."<sup>1</sup> Grafton sought factional support for his ministry; and the incoming representatives of the Bedford faction made their bargain for the removal of colonial matters from Shelburne's hands. Once more the jest of fate had made Hillsborough his successor and once more his work went for naught.

Meanwhile events had moved fast in the Illinois. Garrison followed garrison and commandant commandant. Stirling was succeeded by Major Robert Farmar, Farmar by Lieutenant Colonel John Reed in 1766, Reed by Captain Hugh Forbes in 1768, Forbes by Lieutenant Colonel John Wilkins until 1771. Some of them, such as Stirling and Forbes, seem kindly and honest men; others, as Reed and Wilkins, were tyrannical and corrupt, charging fees for administering oaths of allegiance to the inhabitants, and making their profit in the purchase of rations for the garrison.

Colonial traders had already sought the trade of the Illinois. In 1766 the Philadelphia firm of

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<sup>1</sup> *Letters of Junius*, 1806 Ed. I, p. 163.

Baynton, Wharton and Morgan prepared to embark on the scale of an investment of £30,000 in the Illinois trade. Goods were to be wagoned across the Alleghanies, shipped down the Ohio on boats built at Pittsburg and sold in the Illinois to the Indians, to the French inhabitants, and to the garrison at an expected profit of two hundred per cent. The partner in immediate charge in the Illinois was young George Morgan, effusively affectionate in letters to his wife and perhaps not too faithful to her, noisy in correspondence and probably also in speech, hot headed, but inclined to temper valor with discretion when engaged with a superior antagonist, his affection effusive, but not nearly so lasting as his enmity; so Morgan has written himself down for us in his preserved correspondence.

As profits often do the two hundred per cent failed to materialize. Goods were seized by the lawless "Paxton Boys" of western Pennsylvania, Indian haters who regarded all goods destined for the redskins as fair prize; they were pilfered by rascally agents at Pittsburg who wasted them on fair and frail ladies; they were seized by Indians on the route down the Ohio; when they reached the Illinois they had to compete with goods imported by the French merchants from New Orleans; and Lieutenant Colonel Reed, refusing to trade with his fellow countrymen, sup-

plied the rations of the garrison through the Frenchman, Daniel Bloüin.

All these difficulties developed in time; long before they all appeared, the great Philadelphia firm was in difficulties and had to conduct its business under the supervision of its creditors. Morgan found a friend with whom he could "do the needful" as he put it, in Lieutenant Colonel John Wilkins, with whom he was to quarrel in a year or two. A certain James Rumsey—still on friendly terms with Morgan—to whom the partners wrote fulsome letters of gratitude, transported out for the firm a large number of negro slaves, which Morgan found an excellent merchandise. But Rumsey ultimately joined the service of a rival group of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, merchants, of whom William Murray was soon to be the agent in the Illinois. Between 1770 and 1773 this firm operated much as the Philadelphia one had done, perhaps without much larger profits. Even if Illinois was a frontier in that day, large scale business was done in it. Morgan despatched his Virginia hunters to western Kentucky to kill and salt buffalo beef for the garrison, and reported game badly thinned by French interlopers from over the Mississippi, years before the crack of Daniel Boone's rifle was ever heard in the bounds of the commonwealth.

The French population in the Illinois was a serious problem. The English ministry at first felt aggrieved that it should remain there and till 1774 made no official provision for its government. Captain Stirling authorized one La Grange to decide disputes according to the law of the country and in 1768 Lieutenant Colonel Wilkins established a civil court, partly no doubt to assist his friend, George Morgan, in collecting debts from French merchants. At first it consisted mainly of Englishmen; between 1769 and 1770 all of them but Morgan were replaced by Frenchmen. March 4, 1770, the court was given criminal jurisdiction; but Morgan soon quarreled with Wilkins, and the court after June 6, 1770, ceased to function.

The religious problem was no less serious. Before England took possession of the Illinois, France had decreed the banishment of the Jesuits from all her domains; the possessions of the Society in the Illinois were confiscated and its fathers expelled. One of the Seminary priests, presumably fearing the heretic English would not respect the possessions of a Catholic Mission, sold without due authority for much less than its value the property of the Seminary at Cahokia and left a community of devout Catholics scattered from the Wabash to the Mississippi without any spiritual guidance whatever. As English law still

prohibited the Catholic hierarchy, no organization existed to supply the want till Monseigneur Jean Olivier Briand with the title of superintendent was allowed to function as Bishop of Quebec in 1766.

Meanwhile, one of the banished Jesuits, Father Meurin, gained permission to return to the care of his flock. His story would be a pitiful one were it not illuminated by his saintliness and resignation. Old and feeble of body, he labored heavily at his task. The Spaniards drove him from the western side of the river when he accepted from Briand the powers of apostolic vicar. Despite the threat of being sent in chains to New Orleans he returned secretly when he was needed. The Jesuits in the day of their power had made themselves hated by continually setting on the civil power to punish; and now many men withheld their confessions from Meurin as a Jesuit, and accused him of avarice. He toiled to the limit of his feeble physical powers, uncomplaining, vaunting not himself, asking of his superior only that laborers be sent into the harvest to relieve him.

In answer to his prayer there came a young priest Pierre Gibault. Aggressive, with an excellent opinion of himself, with all the arts of popularity, he soon gained the affections of the people, pushed his way to Vincennes to be re-



ceived there with the deepest feeling of delight by Catholics who feared damnation for their lack of the ordinances of the church. Gibault was fond of Meurin, but regarded him with pity as feeble in mind as well as body. There was little of the saint about Gibault. He petitioned Briand to be allowed to bear arms to defend himself against the savages. Ingenuously he confessed his love of liberty was such that a rebuke from his superior put him at death's door. The spirit of a younger generation unused to obedience and resignation spoke in him.

In the later years of English rule the French inhabitants were manifesting the same spirit. In 1771 they sent Daniel Bloüin to General Gage the British commander-in-chief in America to represent their desire for a civil government modeled on that of Connecticut. Gage naturally rejected the proposal. The occasion gave rise to a most interesting publication—the *Invitation Serieuse aux Habitants des Illinois*. It called on the Illinois French to proceed vigorously in exploiting the economic resources of their country, to establish schools, and to accept the new regime in industry and made the best of it. The restless American spirit and love of liberty had already fired the docile French of the Illinois.

In these same years the English ministry had been little by little reaching a decision of pure

negation. There was a period of hesitancy. To the eye of the ministry the real situation of the distant West lay as obscure as though veiled in the morning mists that rise from the bosom of its great river. Now reports would come to them with a note of optimism. Strong garrisons and forts at the mouths of the Wabash and the Illinois would shut out the French traders. Western colonies of British subjects would supply the garrisons with cheap food and support them in time of war. A little patience, above all a little more expenditure and the prize of trade and possession would be in their grasp.

Then alternated pessimism. The trade was bound to follow the course of the Mississippi to New Orleans; the endeavor to divert it through British territory by cutting a canal outlet to the sea from the Mississippi to the Iberville was fruitless. The expense of the garrisons was very great, they would be useless in time of war, their walls were falling in decay, and there was no British fur trade left for them to protect. Colonies would only inspire the Indians with resentment and cause a new war. Month by month the reports foreboded an Indian war in spite of all efforts to avert it, especially after April, 1769, when the great Pontiac had fallen at Cahokia under the tomahawk of an Illinois bribed by the English. To these latter voices Hillsborough



came more and more to listen; and General Gage, a political soldier, tuned his reports to fit the mood of the secretary.

Hillsborough therefore adopted Shelburne's plan of dropping imperial regulation of Indian trade; he dropped also the project of colonies. Finally he decided to abandon most of the western posts. Fort de Chartres was demolished in 1772 as a military post, though its stone works still survive in fact as a memento of French Illinois. A little garrison was kept in the Illinois however, at Fort Gage at Kaskaskia. The ministry had drifted under the control of Bedfords and Grenvilles; but its policy was now centered on the exertion and display of the imperial authority over the contumacious inhabitants of the seaboard; it had no inclination for the imperial exploitation of the West.

With imperial control not present to direct the westward movement, government officials and private men alike were exploiting the West for themselves. At the actual running of the Indian boundary tentatively laid down in the Proclamation of 1763 the complacency of John Stuart the southern Indian superintendent and strange mistakes on the part of surveyors pushed it as far west as the Kentucky River. At the treaty of Fort Stanwix in 1768 Sir William Johnson accepted of the Iroquois a similar cession of the greater part

of Kentucky. The lawless white frontiersmen began to swarm over the mountains; before them even came the surveyors and agents of the land speculators, choosing the choicest tracts far down the Ohio. In 1774 Richard Henderson of North Carolina scented a revolution on the way that would throw the West open to American settlement and projected his Transylvania colony in central Kentucky. In 1773 and 1775 William Murray, acting in the latter year as agent for Lord Dunmore, the land speculating royal governor of Virginia, bought of the Indians two great tracts of land on the Illinois and Wabash Rivers.

The British government found that if it would not adopt a decisive policy its subjects would. Ever since 1769 it had been coquetting with a scheme for a colony on the upper course of the Ohio, Vandalia, for which the astute Samuel Wharton of Baynton, Wharton and Morgan, had adroitly secured plenty of the best social and political backing; Hillsborough had been driven from office on the pretext that he opposed it. But the news of the Boston Tea Party of December, 1773, ruined Vandalia's chances. The British ministry pressed through the Quebec Act of 1774. Originally designed to restore to the French of Canada their law, the full exercise of their religion, and relief from a representative government exercised among them by a handful of

Englishmen, it sought to deal with the problem of the Illinois by extending the bounds of Quebec to take in the whole Northwest. Not only would this allow the little French settlements at Detroit, Ouiatenon, Vincennes and the Illinois to be governed economically by representatives of the governor at Quebec; the presence of French law might keep out English settlers and land speculators, check lawless land purchases, and tie the trade to Montreal and its Scotch merchants.

On this note of negation ends the eleven years of British opportunity in the Illinois. The British government had shown itself as incapable of projecting the orderly settlement of the West as it had of incorporating the Atlantic seaboard colonies in an imperial system. It had hoped to maintain the *status quo* indefinitely in the West by the means of the Quebec Act. The inevitable taking possession of the interior by the new American people might have been regulated as Shelburne had wished to do; but it was to be checked neither by paper proclamations, nor the terms of Acts of Parliament. France had failed in the Illinois because she had no materials there for building a strong colony. England had failed because by her regulations she defied great human forces. As the imperial opportunity offered her in 1763 fades out in the Quebec Act of 1774 certain facts remain. The squatter and the land

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speculator, familiar figures of the frontier for a century before and a century and a quarter to follow, have passed the edge of the Great Valley. The French in Illinois have become restive, and are dreaming of a state of things in which they may work out their destiny independent of Downing Street and Versailles alike. Most important of all, Pennsylvania trader and Virginia hunter have found the path to the Illinois; if the opportunity invites thither they may tread it again.

## CHAPTER III

### THE AMERICAN CONQUEST

**I**N MANY respects the American Revolution was a frontier movement. In colony after colony the dwellers in the up-country were the deciding weight in the scale of revolt against British rule. Many of them were non-British in race; they chafed at the British policy of barring the West to them; and compared with the tide water colonists their sense of the social prestige that reflected from London, and their respect for British military and naval power was of the slightest. Almost coincident in point of time with the Revolution was the first great rush of settlement in the Ohio Valley; and the need of protecting the new settlements against the tomahawks of British Indians led to projected attacks on Detroit and the conquest of the French villages in the Illinois by George Rogers Clark. Ultimately this last contributed to the diplomatic situation that in the treaty of 1783 gave the United States title to Illinois and the Northwest.

The story of the conquest of the Illinois is, then, interwoven with the story of the Revolution in the West; and that story begins with Dunmore's

War, in the summer of 1774; when, goaded by continual encroachment from squatter and surveyor in the Ohio Valley the Indians raised the hatchet. Lord Dunmore, last royal governor of Virginia, himself foremost among the land speculators, proclaimed a crusade against the redskins in which backwoodsman and speculator joined. "The Oppertuntuy we hav So long wished for, is now before us," wrote Colonel William Preston of the frontier Virginia county of Fincastle.<sup>1</sup> The Indians were defeated near the site of Charleston, West Virginia, at the battle of Point Pleasant; but before the day in 1775 which was to see the definitive treaty, Dunmore was a refugee on a British ship of war; and some of his former associates in the war, securing possession of Fort Pitt negotiated the final treaty in the name and interests of the Continental Congress.

Not all Dunmore's associates joined the Revolution. Refugees among the British like the Girtys and Alexander McKee, hated from one end of the frontier to the other, were to marshal the Indians in the British interest against Kentucky. To Dr. John Connelly, for thirty years the stormy petrel of the northwest frontier, occurred the project of leading a British and Indian expedition from Detroit to seize Fort Pitt,

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<sup>1</sup> Kellogg, *Dunmore's War*, 93.



break the rebellion in the back country, and ultimately establish communication with the British fleet. The American attack on Canada of 1775 frustrated the scheme. No forces could be spared from the defense of essential points like Quebec and Montreal; and Connelly's plans in the hands of Lieutenant Governor Henry Hamilton of Detroit degenerated into a series of Indian raids on the new Kentucky settlements in 1777. The Indians it is true were urged to take prisoners, but they usually took scalps. In 1776 George Morgan, formerly trader in the Illinois, took station at Fort Pitt as Indian commissioner for Congress in the middle district, seeking to keep the Indians friendly to the United States; but murders by lawless whites and the constant encroachment of new settlers made his task supremely difficult. From end to end the frontier was harried by bands, often led by renegades like the Girtys.

The Americans, however, had soon discovered that down the Mississippi lay needed military stores and supplies presided over by a Spanish governor whose neutrality toward the United States was most benevolent. In 1776-7 powder was run up the river from New Orleans to Wheeling, probably with the assistance of some men in the Illinois country. In 1778 Captain George Willing set out on a grand expedition of plunder against the hapless British settlements in West

Florida. It served as a feint to distract attention from Clark's blow at the Illinois in that very year.

Men's minds were not only turned to the Southwest. It was becoming clearer and clearer that Detroit was the strategic point in the British position in the West. Its loss would confine them to Lakes Ontario and Erie; and the upper lake region and the Mississippi would slip from their grasp. In 1776 both Morgan and General Arthur St. Clair had urged a blow from Fort Pitt at Detroit, and in 1777 and 1778 expeditions under Continental generals were actually projected. In the latter year George Rogers Clark carried out his project of seizing the Illinois country both as a link with the Spaniards across the Mississippi and at New Orleans and as a base for an attack on Detroit.

It is necessary to glance back at the situation in the Illinois villages. In 1772, after the dismantling of Fort de Chartres Captain Hugh Lord had gathered the little English garrison at Kaskaskia. His relations with the French inhabitants were pleasant. The Quebec Act designated Vincennes, Detroit, and the Illinois as districts each to be governed by a lieutenant governor and judges; but the lieutenant governor for the Illinois had never repaired to his post. In 1776 Captain Lord and his garrison were withdrawn for use



farther east; and Lord deputed his authority to Phillippe de Rocheblave, last of the British commandants in the Illinois.

De Rocheblave's record had not been overly prepossessing. He had begun his career in the French regime acquiring speedily a reputation for intrigue; had governed at Ste. Genevieve for the Spaniards, but had left his post under a cloud. In 1776 he was available for chance employment, and accordingly, without subordinates, troops, or funds was left to exert in the Illinois such authority as the inhabitants would let him.

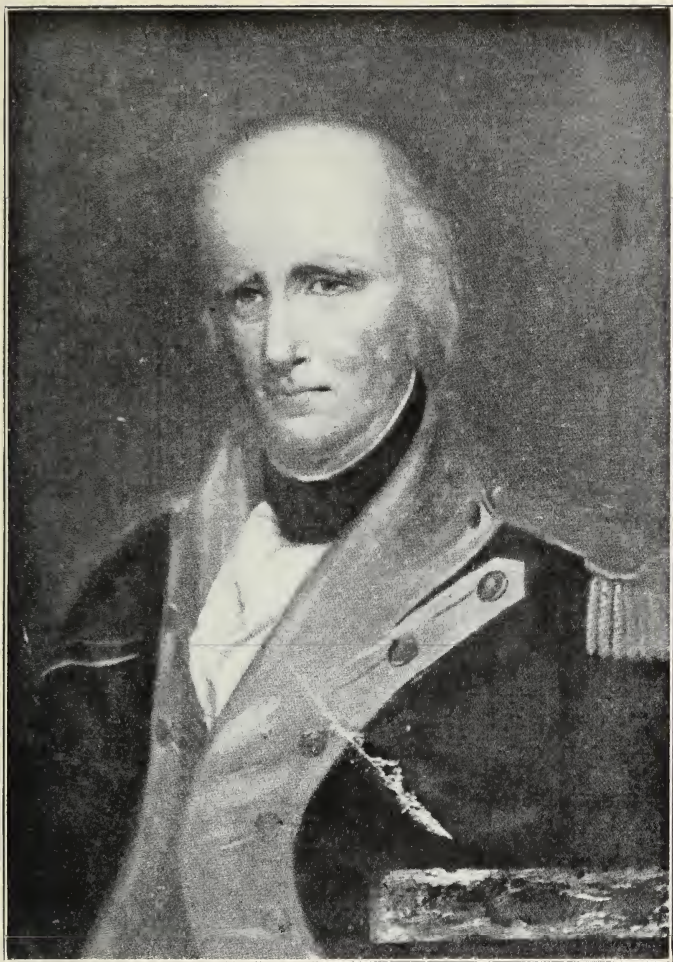
Under the circumstances he accomplished as much perhaps as anyone could have done. He had the support of Cerré and Viviat, two of the most substantial Frenchmen of the villages, and of the lesser inhabitants; but such resident Englishmen as Thomas Bentley, William Murray, and others who had come for trade were outspoken in their opposition. Rocheblave wrote long reports to his superiors, begging for support, but he wrote and implored in vain. Through his letters runs the note of foreseen disaster impending. The Spanish commandant across the river has told the Indians that when the corn is so high he will have something to tell them. Bentley is a traitor he dares not have arrested till he is lured away to Mackinac. Some of the inhabitants have supplied boats bringing munitions to the Amer-

icans from New Orleans. He is surrounded by spies, traitors and enemies. The last of these letters he penned July 4, 1778, the day George Rogers Clark broke in on him.

The figure of Clark is one of the stateliest and most pathetic in American history. He was now twenty-six years old. At twenty he had first come to the Ohio country; at twenty-two he had served in Dunmore's War. He had been instrumental in securing the absorption of Henderson's colony of Transylvania into the Virginia county of Kentucky. As major of militia in the new county he decided to protect his charge by capturing the British bases for the Indian raids. Never successful so far, to the end of the Revolution with inadequate resources in men and means, he kept the grip on the region of the Ohio that helped to secure it for the United States in 1783. His later years beset by poverty and drink, in which he intrigued with Spaniard and Frenchman, are pitiful. He prided himself much on his strong resemblance to George Washington in form and feature; like him also in courage, resource, and resolution, he fell short of that perfect balance in character, that wisdom in public and private concerns alike, that makes Washington nearer the ideal citizen of the Greek philosophers than any other man who has arisen in the twenty-odd centuries since they first framed it. Washington could render his

country supreme service and at the same time lay the foundations of a great estate. Clark conquered for Virginia an abiding place for twenty millions of his countrymen, but lived to see himself a poverty stricken stranger in it.

It was in December of 1777 that Clark obtained the consent of Governor Thomas Jefferson of Virginia to his scheme of conquest; the next spring he set out, collecting his meager forces at the Falls of the Ohio, near the present site of Louisville. With a little band thinned by desertion to a hundred and seventy-five rifles he floated down the Ohio to the site of Fort Massiac whence he struck out overland for Kaskaskia rather than stem the current of the Mississippi with his boats. He arrived at Kaskaskia the evening of July 4, 1778. Rocheblave could not muster the French militia against him. Clark won over Cerré and Father Gibault, the busy young priest sent out by Briand ten years before, and the French inhabitants joyfully embraced the cause of American liberty. Gibault hastened off to Vincennes and persuaded the inhabitants to accept the American cause and, transferring their allegiance, to sign the famous Oath of Vincennes. Clark made treaties with the Indian tribes of the Northwest. He supported his little army by supplies purchased from the inhabitants with drafts on New Orleans drawn on Oliver Pollock the loyal



GEORGE ROGERS CLARK  
(1752 - 1818)

[From a copy by Edwards of Jarvis's portrait; the copy being in possession of the Wisconsin Historical Society]



financial agent of Virginia who in keeping Clark supplied was to ruin himself.

On hearing of Clark's success the Virginia assembly December 9, 1778, created the County of Illinois as a county of Virginia. Three days later John Todd was appointed county lieutenant. On his arrival in the Illinois he laid off in his county, as large as an empire, three districts, Kaskaskia, Cahokia, Vincennes; in each of these a court of justice was elected by the inhabitants. The Illinois country was now a part of the Old Dominion.

Clark's work of conquest was by no means complete. In the early winter of 1778-9 Governor Hamilton of Detroit launched an expedition, English, French, and Indian, against Vincennes. The fickle French, unwilling to fight against their countrymen, deserted their leader, Captain Helm, who surrendered to Hamilton. The "Hair buyer" now only awaited settled weather in the spring to recapture Kaskaskia and Cahokia in the same way.

Clark saw the situation demanded desperate measures. With what was left of his Virginia forces and with the French of the Illinois he set out for Vincennes across the swollen rivers and flooded bottom lands of an Illinois February. The story of that journey, of weary men wading for miles in water reaching to the waist or the



neck, crossing one by one the swollen tributaries of the Wabash without place to rest for days together, spurred on by the indomitable will of their leader, is one of the great episodes of Illinois history. Arrived at Vincennes, Clark, by the art of bluffing he understood so well, separated the inhabitants of the town from the "Hair buyer," Hamilton, besieged him in Fort Sackville in the town and took him and his forces prisoner.

With the recapture of Vincennes and the taking of Hamilton, Clark stood at the zenith of his achievements. All that seemed left to be done was to complete his original plan by the capture of Detroit, which would bar the British once and for all from the upper lakes and the upper Mississippi. Clark failed to take Detroit in 1779 because three hundred Kentuckians under Colonel John Bowman instead of cooperating with him went on a futile Indian raid. In the fall of that year Clark disposed his forces in the Illinois villages and at Vincennes, himself taking post at Fort Jefferson at the Iron Banks on the Mississippi a few miles below the mouth of the Ohio. He hoped to take Detroit in the spring of 1780. But the French were tired of supplying his troops for pay in paper money and the commander at Pittsburg failed to cooperate. Instead of taking the offensive Clark planned to withdraw his forces to Fort Jefferson, and there from a position in

readiness prevent the British from reoccupying the Illinois.

Illinois was still a scene of military operations. In 1780 the British launched a direct attack upon the French villages in the Illinois and St. Louis; but Clark returned to the defense of Cahokia, and the attacks on both sides of the river were beaten off. Later in the same year a French officer, La Balme, came to the Illinois, under what auspices and for what purpose is not clear. He led an ill-considered expedition of Illinois French against Detroit but was defeated and killed on the way. In revenge early in 1781 under the auspices of the Spanish commandant at St. Louis, the French from both sides of the river captured the British fort at St. Joseph, held it for a day and then retreated as they had come. Save for Indian raids and murders becoming more and more frequent as the war drew to a close the active operations in Illinois ended.

The Illinois villages in the years after 1779 were sinking fast into anarchy. The inhabitants soon recovered sufficiently from their first enthusiasm for liberty to discover that the Virginia paper currency proffered them for supplies was sadly depreciated. Drafts drawn by Clark on Oliver Pollock at New Orleans exhausted Pollock's private fortune long before his patriotism. The French villagers in the Illinois were not so



primitive as not to have a somewhat sophisticated view of credit and commercial transactions; they began to withhold supplies. Withholding supplies from Clark's Kentucky backwoodsmen was an ill task, however, and in various ways they supplied themselves. The French were soon at odds with their deliverers.

John Todd and his elected county courts made some attempt to intervene in behalf of the inhabitants. But in November, 1779, Todd left the Illinois forever, designating Richard Winston as his deputy. Of the courts he had established, the Cahokia court preserved its authority and maintained its regular elections till the establishment of county government under the Northwest Ordinance in 1790. The Vincennes court held office till 1787, the justices successfully staving off elections to fill their places. The Kaskaskia court had the most troublous experiences of any, falling victim finally to the opposition of the American settlers.

The year 1779 is important in the history of Illinois as the year of the coming of the first Americans to make their permanent homes in the Illinois. The first settlement in the Kaskaskia district at Bellefontaine dates from this year. In the course of the next year or two, appear such names familiar in later Illinois history as Moore, Oglesby, Shadrach Bond. In the Cahokia dis-

trict the first American settlement was at the Grand Ruisseau. Differing from the French in manners, language, religion, and custom, satisfied of their own superiority, defiant of law and government not of their own choice, the Americans added to the difficulty of maintaining orderly authority, some of them soon becoming the tools of the tyranny of John Dodge.

John Dodge, of Connecticut origin, first made his appearance in the Illinois in 1780 engaged with Thomas Bentley in buying up claims on Virginia at a heavy discount. In 1781 they went east to collect, but that same year Dodge reappeared. He charged Richard Winston, deputy county lieutenant with treason and kept him in prison for a time. The Kaskaskia court did not show what Winston thought sufficient energy in assisting him, and he abolished the court in November, 1782. Next year he returned to Virginia, leaving the *Sieur Timothe de Monbreun* as his successor, a man whose connection with the founding of Nashville reminds us that a trade on the Mississippi, Tennessee, and Cumberland had already developed. De Monbreun failed to restrain Dodge who fortified the old fort above Kaskaskia, and with a few American adventurers ruled with a heavy and corrupt hand over the luckless French inhabitants.

For almost five years a second migration of

French across the river to Spanish rule had been taking place. Gibault had gone in 1778, Cerré in 1779. The French who could not transfer their possessions across the river were reduced to petitioning for relief the far away Congress of the Confederation. January 5, 1782, the legal existence of the Virginian county of Illinois came to an end with the act creating it. Till the question was settled as to whether the government of the West should be vested in the states or in the nation the unhappy habitants might look in vain for legal government. In June of 1786 the Kaskaskians petitioned Congress against Dodge, alleging he was the tool of British traders; and Congress took the petition under advisement. In 1787 the Kaskaskians elected a new court; but the political address of the Americans at Bellefontaine secured the choice of Americans for half the places in it. The impossibility of conducting a court so split between races and languages led to its division into two. General Harmar, the commander of the American troops in the West, visited the Illinois in 1787; but he felt the blandishments and hospitality of Dodge and fell in with his insinuations that the French were unfit for self-government.

The news of the passage of the Ordinance of 1787 threw the Kaskaskia district in deeper anarchy were it possible. The legal authority of

its court could thenceforth be defied as nonexistent. John Dodge in his hilltop citadel with his band of supporters was the very image of the tyrant of a Greek city state of twenty-three centuries before. The Spanish commandant encouraged Indian raids on the Illinois to attract settlers to the comparative order of the Spanish side; the Indians robbed and murdered; white men were equally lawless; neither property nor female virtue was safe.

At Cahokia things went better. Despite the theory of French incapacity for self-government the court there maintained its authority. When the Americans at Grand Ruisseau sought to set up an independent court, the French court repressed the scheme and put the malcontents in irons. Eventually, however, the Americans of Grand Ruisseau and Bellefontaine were allowed to unite in a court of their own. Even at this disorder was rife. John Edgar, a man of property, one of the later American settlers, in 1789 promised that he could hold out till March of 1790. If stable government did not come by then, he must abandon the Illinois for good. But on March 5, 1790, Governor Arthur St. Clair arrived at Kaskaskia, and the course of the Illinois country as a part of the Northwest Territory began.

We must now turn back to trace the course of

events by which the United States secured the Northwest and made the first steps toward providing for its government. The acquisition of the territory was the result of an intricate tangle of diplomacy internal and external. Since 1778 France had been the ally of the United States and at war with Great Britain. Since 1779 Spain had been involved in the war as the ally of France. Much has been written as to the attitude of those powers toward the young nation. The view that France had dreams of recovering the Northwest and perhaps Canada has the support of Professor Frederick J. Turner, who sees in La Balme's expedition a corroboration; but the present balance of authority is the other way. France entered the war with a view to reviving her lost prestige in European politics by the defeat of her old rival, England. She was probably at all times disposed to fulfill the specific terms of her bargain with the United States; but she had also to satisfy her ally, Spain; and to do both was a difficult matter.

Spain had entered the war under the influence of the imperialist revival she experienced in the second half of the eighteenth century. In those years she was extending her possessions in California; she hoped in the war to recover the Floridas, lost to England in 1763 and the fortress of Gibraltar lost sixty years before. But her colonial

empire was to be one of absolute rulers and docile subjects; and the example of rebellious colonists and lawless frontiersmen was one which she wished to keep far from her borders. She wished to see the American republic remain a little group of distracted states, impoverished in finance, limited in territory, a perpetual object lesson to subjects against the mirage called liberty. Any really generous treatment of the United States in the treaty of peace she opposed; and France, striving to satisfy her in this respect had continually to urge on the Congress extreme moderation in its territorial demands.

She found certain of the state delegations to the Congress ready to cooperate. The division of the states into landed and landless is significant. On the one hand such states as New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland had boundaries long since fixed at limits rendering them diminutive beside the great belts of territory claimed by Massachusetts, Connecticut, and North Carolina under seventeenth century "sea to sea" charters; far more beside the vast claims of New York to the lands over which her vassals, the Iroquois, claimed sway to the West. Greediest and most pertinacious in her claims, however, was Virginia, insisting that the extension of her boundaries west and northwest as her old charter bade, would throw the greatest part of the old Northwest and



all Kentucky into her hands. What equality, argued the small states, could there be in a union of which some members were so vast and others so small? Should the blood and treasure of Maryland and Delaware be poured out in the battles of the Revolution to win fortunes for Virginia speculators? Maryland refused to ratify the Articles of Confederation till New York's cession to Congress of her claims had ensured that all the western claims would be pooled for the benefit of the United States as a whole. Virginia finally ceded her claims north of the Ohio in 1784; specifying that the claims of her enemies the land companies should forever be barred and that her expenses for Clark's conquest be reimbursed her.

Meanwhile various interests clustered around Maryland. The land companies such as the Illinois and Wabash and the Vandalia who foresaw the ruin of their claims should Virginia make good her hold; the French agents anxious that the United States should not insist on too large a territory in the treaty; all looked to Maryland as their advocate. In 1780-1781 it was a question whether, losing state after state to the British in the South, the confederacy would not as Spain suggested negotiate on the ground of present possession.

The victory of Yorktown changed the military

situation in the East; and the fall of Lord North's ministry in England ensured the colonies liberal terms; for the Earl of Shelburne, prime minister at the critical time of the negotiations, resolved to secure to Great Britain the future friendship of America and at all costs to detach her from dependency on France and Spain. Possibly the American diplomatists might have gained Canada by more astute play of their hands; but the acquisition of all the Northwest to the channel of navigation through Lakes Ontario, Erie, Huron, and Superior was a triumph great and unforeseen by France.

The years 1780-1784, had seen the solution of two problems regarding the Northwest and the Illinois; the title in it was to rest in the United States; and its settlement was to take place under the auspices of the United States and for the benefit of the United States as a whole. Whether the new nation would have the strength to hold the West when England under ministers less liberal than Shelburne should repent of her generosity in 1782; whether the United States could muster the political wisdom necessary to solve the problem of government and empire where both France and England had failed, were still open questions.

The first question was to be answered only in the next generation; but the United States' demon-



stration of her capacity to meet the second comes within the space of ten years. The very fact that the congress of the United States had a West to develop and needed efficient powers to do so was a contributing factor to the framing of the Constitution of the United States in 1787; the need of an organization under which free government might develop in the West bore fruit in the famous Ordinance for the government of the territory northwest of the River Ohio.

Congressional action on the problem of western organization really begins with Jefferson's draft of the Ordinance of 1784. In the western country were already settlements; in the present states of Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Illinois, Tennessee, and Kentucky. Jefferson's proposal was to block the whole acquisition of 1783 off into embryo states, ten of them in the Northwest and Kentucky, with extent determined in part at least by physical configuration. Within each of these states the inhabitants might form an almost autonomous government that on reaching a certain population might be admitted to the original sisterhood of states. Slavery, Jefferson proposed to prohibit in the West, North and South alike after 1800. Jefferson's proposal was amended and recommitted; for three years Congress brooded over the ordinance. In 1785 Monroe brought back word that the prairies were a hope-

less desert sure never to be densely populated; and Congress decided the country north of the Ohio should be the basis of three or at most of five states. Congress was again debating a draft ordinance not far removed in form from that finally adopted, when a new factor gave an impetus to their work.

Since the close of the Revolution a group of revolutionary soldiers, mainly New Englanders, had been considering the possibility of a settlement founded in the wilderness, where in the economic race they might regain the ground their patriotism had lost them at home. Washington had endorsed their plan, but Congress did nothing; and for a time they thought of settling in the future state of Maine. However, General Rufus Putnam, who had been surveying lands in Maine after visiting the Ohio country reported the latter incomparably better, and new interest was aroused. An Ohio Company was formed in New England among old soldiers who agreed to contribute continental scrip and bounty land warrants to the purchase of a large tract at the Muskingum River. To negotiate the purchase they sent several agents to Congress, notably the Reverend Manasseh Cutler, Congregational divine, chaplain in the Revolution, scientific botanist, physician, financial negotiator, politician, future congressman.

On arriving at New York where the Congress was sitting Manasseh Cutler was not long in perceiving the strong points in his position. The men of his company, conservative, many of them supposedly favorers of monarchical government in the United States, were the sort of men the growing conservative spirit wished settled in the West to curb its lawlessness. The news of the purchase and prospective settlement by such men would draw additional purchasers. Wealthy New York speculators planned to launch a land company of their own in connection and assisted the Ohio Company in getting what it wanted.

With those influences working for him Cutler made the best possible bargain. Primarily interested in the financial terms of the transaction, he was concerned incidentally in getting the Northwest Ordinance made a fit thing for New England men to live under. As it finally passed, the local autonomy in Jefferson's draft was modified. In the first stage of territorial government, authority was to be exercised by a governor, secretary, and judges appointed by Congress, selecting laws from the codes of the original thirteen states. With a population of 5,000 the territory might pass to the second stage in which the lower house of the legislature was elected by the people, the governor chosen by Congress, and the council elected by cooptation of the Congress and the

territorial lower house. With a population of 60,000 within the bounds designated for a state, the state was to be admitted to the Union on an equality with the older commonwealths. By the famous Sixth Article of Compact, slavery was never to be introduced.

The ordinance, as has been said, represents a reaction from the extreme of autonomy of Jefferson's draft of 1784. Yet wisdom there undoubtedly was in dispensing with representative institutions in a frontier settlement that was almost a military outpost; here liberty enough would exist in any case and stronger government than the community could impose on itself was necessary. The two successive degrees of enlargement, to the second territorial stage and to statehood were a pledge that the older states would never try to reduce the West to a permanent colonial dependency. Citizens of the old states might go into the new country secure that the political privileges they had enjoyed at home would follow them as fast as they were able to make use of them. So far as a paper plan could solve it, the problem of imperial organization in the West had been solved. Whether the United States was strong enough to hold the territory and put the plan in operation or whether her teeming western population might not develop in allegiance to some other government time only could tell.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE NORTHWEST 1783-1816

**B**Y THE treaty of 1783 the United States had acquired a title to the Northwest, but little more. The Illinois villages, torn by anarchy, would look to her for orderly government; from her borders the headstrong frontier element would pour across the Ohio against the Indians; but that was all the "thirteen fires" — as the Indians named the new republic — could reckon on in 1783. For thirteen years Great Britain retained the posts south of the treaty line that controlled the Great Lakes and the northern part of the Northwest Territory; for twenty years more her citizens controlled the region commercially and encouraged the Indian to make head against the American. Not until 1815 did the British abandon the hope of obtaining a buffer Indian state in the Northwest; not until 1816 did the United States enter on full possession of her mighty empire.

To grasp the difficulties of the years 1783-1816 one must understand a theory and a policy which ran through the writings of Canadian governors and commandants of that generation with respect

to American control of the Northwest. The theory is that the negotiators of 1782 from ignorance or folly had committed a terrible mistake. Running the international boundary through the channel of navigation of the Great Lakes and the Grand Portage from Lake Superior to the Lake of the Woods and the Far West, they had shared with the Americans the control of the lakes and of the routes on which must pass the fur trade of those regions. At every portage on the route the Americans might establish themselves.

To Montreal merchants interested in retaining a monopoly of the fur trade this was disaster enough; but the military officers reasoned a step further. Whoever controlled the Indian trade of the Northwest controlled the Indians. Hopelessly withdrawn from the independence of his fathers to hunt for the white man, the Indian must look to his master for blankets, kettles, gun powder and rifles. In time of peace the white man's hunter, in time of war his mercenary soldier, employment with one side or the other he must seek. Supposing him employed by the American in time of war—and the British officer judged the American's willingness to employ him by his own—the long unstable line of defense in Canada, stretching from the straits of Detroit to Quebec might be pierced by attack from the Chaudière or



Lake Champlain, the right flank cut off by an advance at the outlet of Lake Ontario, and turned by the attack of an army of western Indians at Niagara and Detroit. One campaign with Indian assistance should bring the Americans to the gates of Quebec. On the other hand, if the Indians of the Northwest were on the side of the British, the right flank at least was safe. At all costs, therefore, the Indians must be held in attachment to the British.

The policy by which this was to be accomplished must necessarily be a delicate one that sometimes trod close to the margin of international comity. So long as Great Britain could avoid surrendering the western posts she held south of the international boundary she could retain fur trade and Indians alike. But in the long run she must attempt to maintain an Indian buffer state that might stand permanently between the American settlements on the Ohio, and the British fur trade on the lakes. Not till 1815 did British officials finally abandon the project, and admit that by policy, commerce and the sword the United States had won undisputed control of the Northwest.

Of course this policy varied from time to time. Till 1790 the British counted on assistance from American sources; the disaffection to the United States in Kentucky and Vermont, then outlying frontiers of the Union but loosely connected with



it by law or sentiment, the supposed friendliness of the Ohio Company settlers to monarchical institutions. When the Nootka Sound controversy was on foot with Spain in 1790, and it seemed that Great Britain would make war for control of the north Pacific coast, the British realized that the Americans in the West, if not the United States, might be a useful auxiliary. Toward the end of the century they counted on it also, in the days when it seemed that Spanish Louisiana would pass from the feeble hands of Spain to the vigorous ones of France, and that French influence would dominate the tribes of the Northwest and control the Mississippi River route to the sea. For a decade after 1796 the policy of hostility to American interests in the West in view of more immediate danger remained veiled; but then disputes over the rights of neutral trade once more revealed its presence.

The United States in 1783 had plunged boldly into the solution of her difficult problem. She demanded, even if in vain, the cession of the western posts—Mackinac, Detroit, Niagara, and the rest. She gathered the chiefs of the Iroquois or Six Nations and the Indian Nations of the Ohio and Indiana and in a series of treaties culminating with the treaty of Fort Harmar of 1789 secured paper cessions of all but the northern part of Ohio. But the treaties and the encroach-

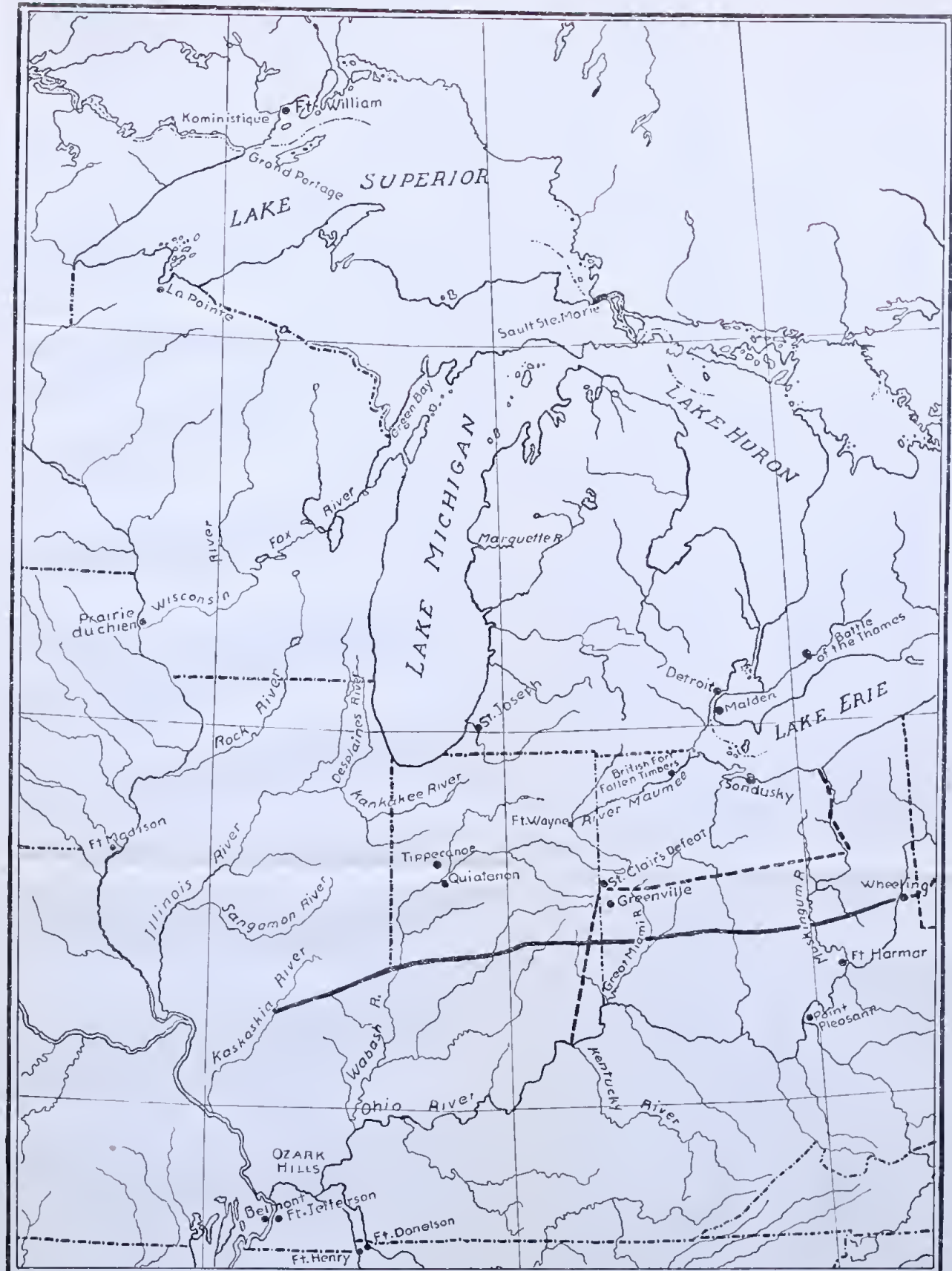
ments of the white settlers goaded the Indians to war, and in 1789 massacre broke out along the Ohio.

The Americans launched punitive expeditions against the country where the Indian villages lay thickest—the interlocking headwaters of the Wabash, the Great Miami, and the Maumee, what is now northwestern Ohio and eastern Indiana; General Harmar's expedition in 1790 ended in something very like a defeat. A year later General Arthur St. Clair, Governor of the Northwest Territory, a feeble old man, led a still larger one; it was ill-equipped, ill-supplied, ill-disciplined and started too late in the year. November 4, 1791, its campaign came to an end when its camp on the upper waters of the Wabash was stormed by the tribesmen in a massacre proverbial to the day when Custer's Last Fight replaced it. The Indians seemed on the point of making good their demand that the Americans give up the claim to the Northwest acquired by the Treaty of 1783, and retire behind the Ohio. The United States, while raising a new army, opened negotiations for peace.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> It is hard to state precisely the policy of the British from 1791 to 1795. The home government and the Canadian officials alike had welcomed the pretexts offered by the American failure to live up to the provisions of the Treaty of 1783, that no legal barrier should be opposed to the payment of debts owed to British merchants, in order to retain the western posts and the western fur trade. The local British Indian agents and the





SCALE OF MILES  
0 10 20 30 40 50 100 150 200

THE OLD NORTHWEST  
Showing Places Mentioned in Text

Line of Treaty of Greenville  
National Road  
State Boundaries

After St. Clair's defeat the British game became indeed a difficult one. Elaborate American preparations against the Indians equally threatened Detroit; and as an outpost to defend it in 1794 the British founded a new fort on American soil at the rapids of the Maumee. They took under their fostering care the negotiations of the United States with the Indians, permitting American commissioners in 1793 to deal with the Indians through British intermediaries. The English officials hoped that the Indians would grant a boundary that the United States could accept, and thus assure permanently their desired neutral ground in the Old Northwest. They enlisted the

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British fur traders who wandered unchecked through the territory undoubtedly encouraged the Indian resistance. The higher British officials in Canada were at least complacent to it. They were convinced, or affected to be convinced, that the expeditions of Harmer and St. Clair had for their goal the seizure of Detroit and with it control of the upper lakes and the lion's share of their fur trade. Yet while they wished Indian resistance to American aggression they disapproved strongly its reaching the point of war. War injured the fur trade and threatened ultimately to involve Great Britain herself. John Jay was in England endeavoring by a general treaty to settle the various issues, including those of the Indians and the western posts which in 1793 had seemed to be hurrying the two nations into a general war for which neither one was anxious. Therefore when Lord Dorchester, governor of Canada, early in 1794 told the Indians that he would not be surprised at war with the United States, and reminded them that a new boundary must then be drawn by the warriors, he much exceeded the policy of the English ministry. Once the American campaign of 1794 against the Indians began Canadian officials had the hard task of retaining the confidence of the Indians without assisting them by any overt act. That they failed is not surprising.

influence of the Six Nations to this end. The Six Nations and the Lake Indians would have offered the United States the Muskingum; but the remainder insisted on the Ohio and the old line of the Treaty of Fort Stanwix of 1768. They refused in the negotiation of 1793 to admit the American commissioners to council until they yielded the Ohio boundary; and the negotiations broke off, as the British believed the Americans intended they should.

While the Indian negotiations of 1793 were in progress, Major General Anthony Wayne had been patiently disciplining a new army, and drilling it in open order formations. In the spring of 1794, Wayne, a wise, wily, cunning Wayne far different from the dare devil hero of such enterprises as the storm of Stony Point where the last order was to carry the works by the bayonet alone, had begun his campaign. Slowly he crept forward into the Indian country fortifying a post at each step. Indian chiefs who knew what good exterior guard was tried in vain to penetrate his outposts and announced that the Americans had now a new war chief who never slept. On August 13, 1794, he issued a manifesto to the tribesmen bidding them take the choice of peace or war, and receiving no satisfactory answer passed down the Maumee valley devastating their villages and corn fields. On the twentieth of August advanc-



ing in open formation through a windrow of the forest he came on the Indians prepared for battle. His infantry, trained as Colonel Bouquet had trained them forty years before, fired and advanced in open order at the charge; the cavalry turned the Indian flank and all was over.

As a military engagement the Battle of the Fallen Timbers was a small affair; the British insisted and probably with truth that but a fraction of the Indian strength was engaged in it; but Wayne, aided by fortune, exploited its full psychological effect on the mercurial Indian temperament. It took place but a little above the new British fort at the Rapids, and the beaten Indians, fleeing to the fort of their British father for shelter, found the gates closed against them by a commandant who feared to give Wayne a pretext to begin hostilities. Wayne put to the torch the Indian villages and the houses of the British traders around the fort, reconnoitering insolently under its very guns. The Indians knew nothing of the diplomatic limitations on the commandant and disillusioned and discouraged, saw themselves deserted by their British father in the hour of need, and his strength flouted by the common enemy. The news of Jay's treaty with its promised surrender of the western posts to the Americans only deepened their sense of abandonment by the British. Through that winter of



1795 the prestige of the British decayed as that of Wayne, the American war chief who for good or evil had kept his word with them, increased. And when Wayne summoned the tribes to meet him in council at Greenville in July of 1795 the chiefs and the warriors flocked in. This would be no treaty conducted with a handful in a corner. Its results would be definitive and permanent.

As delegation after delegation trooped into the post at Greenville they were greeted by Wayne with the assumption of superiority and acquiesced in it. When the moment for actual negotiation came, he demanded of them the surrender of everything southeast of a line across Northwestern Ohio that stands as the basis of all future negotiations and Indian cessions. Further he exacted the cession of small tracts at every important post and portage in the West, the importance of which in control of the trade the Indians themselves well understood. Among these was the future site of Fort Dearborn at Chicago and tracts at Peoria and the mouth of the Illinois River. The tribes protested, but protested as individuals and were easily overawed and silenced; and when Wayne at the final session called on each tribe individually to say if it acquiesced none dared lift a voice against the treaty.

The treaty of Greenville and the surrender by Great Britain in 1796 of the western posts of

which Detroit and Mackinac were the most important, end the first chapter of the struggle of the United States for the Northwest. It had acquired an undisputed foothold for settlement and military control of the whole area. It had yet to learn, however, that trade did not follow the flag; and for twenty years more it seemed to hold only the outward symbols of power in a region where influence with the Indians and profitable trade remained with the British.

For Jay's treaty in spite of the surrender of the posts had been a hard bargain. It had reaffirmed the right of British subjects to navigate the Mississippi freely even though it had been ascertained since the Treaty of 1783 that the river nowhere touched British soil; still worse, it accorded to British traders the right to trade freely in American territory; and the reciprocal provision for the benefit of Americans—the territory of the Hudson Bay Company being excepted from it—was only a hollow mockery. These objections Madison had urged to Jay's Treaty as sufficient ground for its rejection; but Congress had concluded to shoulder the burden.

At this point it is necessary to consider in detail the causes of the British monopoly of the Northwest fur trade. Since the year 1769 the trade formerly enjoyed by the French south of the Hudson Bay trading region had passed into the hands

of Scotch traders and firms at Montreal. On the one hand, they established connections with great London firms who supplied the goods for the trade and marketed the furs; on the other they associated with themselves "wintering partners" in the *pays d'en haut* who supervised the buying of furs from the Indians in their winter hunts. Wintering partners, Montreal merchants, and sometimes London merchants were continually forming loose organizations or pools. Again and again these pools broke down; and resulting trade wars were waged in the West almost to the mouth of the cannon. A pool of this kind existed in 1780 four years before the formation of the famous Northwest Company. From that company or pool there were secessions in 1795, 1798, and 1800, the last year seeing the organization of a New Northwest Company, to reunite with the old after a short commercial war. A Michillimackinac Company trading almost exclusively in the territory of the United States appears in the first years of the nineteenth century comprising some of the firms already engaged in the Northwest Company.

The most natural routes for the trade skirted the international boundary of 1783; its most convenient bases lay in American territory. The easiest route to the Greater Canadian Northwest ran along the channel of the Great Lakes through

the Sault Ste. Marie to the Grand Portage on the north shore of Lake Superior. The alternative route through British territory by the Ottawa River from Montreal to Lake Huron was more expensive; even if one used it he had to pass American territory at the Sault. From Grand Portage the continent spread out before the trader to the shores of the Arctic and the Pacific; till 1796 it was the main depot of the trade to the farther Northwest. After that year the Northwest Company removed farther north on the lake shore to the Kaministiquie route and founded Fort William on British territory as a new base. Mackinac Island in American territory remained the best point for reprovisioning the canoes en route to the farther Northwest.

Mackinac was equally important to the Montreal groups that traded in the United States. In 1799 this trade was estimated at \$100,000 a year, perhaps the major part of the whole trade. A little of it on the shore of Lake Superior was engrossed by the Northwest Company. But most of it fell to the Mackinac groups. Till the beginning of the nineteenth century this trade was still in the hands of independent traders who in 1793 went as far down the Mississippi as the mouth of the Illinois. Even Nashville brought its supplies by way of the Cumberland from Mackinac. Prairie du Chien was an important

subsidiary to Mackinac where by 1812 as many as 6,000 Indians gathered.

Mackinac Island at the opening of the nineteenth century was almost the trading center of the continent. In the spring of the year from out the rivers of the nearer Northwest came the fur trading brigades picking up the members left the preceding fall for the trade with their winter's take of furs. Gaining in numbers with every halt they finally pulled their heavy Mackinac boats or canoes to the Island. Here they were met by the Montreal merchants bringing out the Indian goods to be used for the next year's trade; here the picturesque boatmen and traders spent a year's pay in a few weeks' jollity; here the affairs of the pools were arranged and profits divided. From the Island in the fall the merchants set out for Montreal with the previous year's haul of furs; and the fur trading brigades loaded with Indian goods headed out in every direction; dropping individual traders with goods at likely places en route to trade and hibernate till the brigade picked them up in the spring. Before 1796 it was said the trade at Mackinac called in 800 persons.

"Its Geographical position," wrote Sir George Prevost to Lord Bathurst in 1814, "is admirable, its influence extends, and is felt amongst the Indian Tribes at New Orleans and the Pacific

Ocean, vast Tracts of Country look to it for protection and supplies; and it gives security to the great Trading Establishments of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies; by supporting the Indians on the Mississippi; the only barrier which interposes between them and the Enemy, and which if once forced (an event that lately appeared probable) their progress into the heart of these companies Settlements by the Red River is practicable, & would enable them to execute their long formed project of monopolizing the whole Fur Trade into their own hands—from these observations Your Lordship will be enabled to judge how necessary the possession of this valuable post, situated on the outskirts of these extensive Provinces is daily becoming to their future security and protection.”<sup>1</sup>

The fur trade of the Continent had long since become in men's imaginations a world trade. Soon after the Revolution the Massachusetts sea captains debarred from their old trade with the British West Indies had found their way around the Horn and carried furs from the Pacific Coast to China to be traded for silks, china, and teas for the consumption of the settlements on the Atlantic seaboard. One of the pioneers, Captain Gray of Salem, in 1792 had discovered the river he named for his ship, *Columbia*, giving the United States prior title to its valley. George Mackenzie of the Northwest

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<sup>1</sup> *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, vol. 25, p. 585.



Company, exploring to the Arctic in 1789 and to the Pacific overland in 1793 was moved by the desire of forestalling the Americans on the Pacific Coast. In 1802 he projected a trading organization that should span the continent from Atlantic to Pacific and wrest the China trade in furs from the Americans. But the East India Company monopoly barred the way to a British subject; and his scheme was taken up by an American.

American statesmen recognized only too well the fact that the little garrison at Mackinac upheld the American flag over a post at which British capital monopolized a great American trade. To remedy it by force was impossible and they sought to alleviate it by economic counter organization or diplomatic finesse. In 1796 they had begun a system of government houses for the Indian trade; and early in the nineteenth century they began to establish these in the Northwest, at Detroit and Fort Wayne before 1803, at the mouth of the Missouri and at Fort Dearborn, on the present site of Chicago in 1805; at Sandusky in 1806, at Mackinac and Fort Madison on the Mississippi in 1808.

The fur trading houses were latterly run at a loss, and they served to degrade the United States in the minds of the Indians to the position of a trader; they therefore gave no return in



counteracting the influence over the Indians of British agents.

Diplomatic finesse and annoyances put in the way of the British trader proved more efficacious. In 1798 British goods were still being brought into the United States for Indian trade without paying customs duties. But in 1802 the New Northwest Company feared that United States customs officials had seized at the Sault Indian goods that had not been entered at Mackinac. In 1808 goods of the Michillimackinac Company had been seized while passing Niagara on the pretext that the embargo forbade all imports to the United States. And even if eventually the United States was compelled by diplomatic means to recede from a seizure of this sort the Indians had been left without goods and a full year's trade had been lost. Thus the seizure of 1808 had resulted in the dissolution of the Michillimackinac Company in 1810. When the United States acquired Louisiana, on the pretext that it was territory not covered by the Treaty of Paris and Jay's Treaty, all British traders were excluded from a region where formerly the Spaniards had allowed them to roam at will. By economic artifice and diplomatic chicane American diplomats worked unceasingly to sap the British monopoly.

The British merchants themselves bore testi-

mony to the efficiency of the American policy. In 1808 they assured their government

That the Indian trade within the American Limits must speedily be abandoned by British subjects, if not protected against interruptions of free navigation of the Lakes, fiscal extortions and various other vexations: that if once abandoned, it can never be regained and with its abandonment, will finish British influence with the Indian Nations residing within [without?] the limits of Canada: that British Traders have materially aided in preserving that influence hitherto, the conviction of which is the strong motive with the American Government for wishing, by every means they can devise, to exclude such traders.

If therefore, the minds of His Majesty's Ministers shall be made up to the loss of that portion of Indian Trade carried on within the American territory (which indeed is nearly the whole, except the Northwest) and to the extinction of influence amongst the Indian Tribes . . . .<sup>1</sup> the American government might be allowed to pursue its policy unchecked.

In the repeated negotiations of 1805-1812 these points came up again and again. In 1809 British merchants urged on their government the creation of a neutral zone in the West in which no duties would be levied by either side. The boundary they suggested was the Missouri River west

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<sup>1</sup> *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, vol. 25, p. 256. Memorial of Oct. 20, 1808.

of the Mississippi, the Illinois River and Lake Michigan east of it. The United States must on no account be allowed a foothold on the Columbia River and the Pacific. On the other hand American secretaries of state were instructing negotiators never to surrender the right to British traders to enter the Louisiana purchase.

At last American capital was working into the interior fur trade on a sufficient scale to rival the British. In 1807 Manuel Lisa of St. Louis in association with Pierre Menard and William Morrison of the Illinois country despatched an expedition up the Missouri to trade. The next year saw the incorporation by the three men of the Missouri St. Louis Fur Company. It saw also the incorporation of John Jacob Astor's American Fur Company. For ten years he had been known to the British. "A German person Jacob Oster," the Canadian government had been informed in a letter from New York of 1797, "who frequently visits Canada, who deals largely in Furs, and is at present ('tis said) in that country, has imported in the last ship from London 6,000 stand of arms and 100 casks of gunpowder (the latter he has advertised for sale)."<sup>1</sup> Astor was not merely importing arms which the Canadian government suspected were to be used in a French uprising. By buying furs in Montreal for

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<sup>1</sup> *Canadian Archives*, 1891, p. 155.

export, he learned the fur trade. His American Fur Company was established in 1808 in partnership with Canadian traders and planned on a magnificent scale. His bases for trade were to be Mackinac and Astoria on the Columbia; the two were to be connected by an overland route, and both with New York, by canoe through the Great Lakes, and by ship through the two oceans.

While all these forces were at work sapping the British control of the trade, the United States was engaged in an Indian policy designed to get rid as fast as possible of the tribes of the Northwest. President Jefferson planned to reduce their possessions and by teaching them the arts of agriculture to change them from hunters to farmers; at the same time he and his governor of Indiana Territory, William Henry Harrison, sought cession after cession. As the Indian tribes, corroded like metal on the touch of the acid of the white man's fire water, lost numbers, self reliance and force, treaties were extracted from the wrecks of the tribes. By 1809 Harrison had obtained treaties surrendering practically all Ohio, eastern Michigan, southern Indiana, and most of western and southern Illinois.

In protest against this policy there rose perhaps the ablest of all the Indian statesmen warriors who have sought to withstand the march of the white man—Tecumseh. Working with



OLD STATE HOUSE (1837-1876) IN WHICH LINCOLN RECEIVED THE NEWS OF HIS ELECTION TO  
THE PRESIDENCY

[Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Library]





the spiritual influence of his brother, the Shawnee Prophet, he drew the Indians away from their tribal chiefs and villages into communities from which the white man, his goods and fire water were barred. As the Northwest belonged to the Indians in common — so he taught his converts — there must be no more sales or cessions save by common consent. Tecumseh, at first so weak that a tomahawk blow inspired by a rival chieftain might have ended him and his movement together, by 1811 had become a menace to American authority; while he was absent from his villages in the upper Wabash country engaged in cementing a still wider league against the Americans, there came Harrison's expedition against him of November, 1811, and the barren victory of Tippecanoe which hardly scotched the influence of Tecumseh and the Prophet.

In 1811 the diplomacy of Madison appeared to have reached an impasse; and the belief that British aid to the Indians had rendered the Tippecanoe campaign a necessity swept the West with the war fever. Since 1807 the diplomatic difficulties of Great Britain and the United States over neutral trade had grown more and more acute; and the British government, again compelled to face the possibility of war on the Canadian frontier, had newly enlarged its Indian department. The frontiersmen believed British agents were



supplying Tecumseh and urging him on. It was the hope of the conquest of Canada in a single campaign and the ending of the British control for all time that made such typical westerners as Henry Clay of Kentucky demand war. British officials on their side hoped to extort from the United States by the treaty that the Indians

should retain possession of the lands they now occupy and thereby form as long as we remain in friendship with them a formidable barrier to any future attempts of America against His Majesty's possessions in that neighborhood.<sup>1</sup>

Both sides looked with confidence to the War of 1812 to settle in their favor the control of the Northwest.

In calculating the advantages of the American position on the Great Lakes, the Canadian military authorities had not reckoned with the imbecility of their first military opponents. The blame for the disgraces of the War of 1812 has usually been fastened on the militia and volunteer system, but as one studies the army of the United States under the regime of General James Wilkinson from 1796 to 1812, inefficiently managed, honey-combed with intrigue and corruption, one wonders if a part of the blame should not be allotted to it; and if a volunteer militia is not as good or

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<sup>1</sup> Prevost to Bathurst, Oct. 5, 1812, *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, vol. 25, p. 359.

as bad as the regular army set to discipline it can make it.

The first campaign in the Northwest beyond all expectations gave the British control of the upper lakes. Madison had not reenforced Mackinac before navigation closed; immediately on the outbreak of war it was attacked by a force of British and Indians from St. Joseph and the commander induced to surrender to avoid an Indian massacre. With Mackinac all the Indians of the Northwest fell under British control; and again at Detroit, August 16, General Hull was induced to surrender by the representations of British officers that they could not hold their Indian allies from massacre in case of victory. The day before the American garrison of Fort Dearborn at Chicago retreating from the Fort were massacred two miles away from it.

The British control of the West depended on the naval control of Lakes Erie and Ontario. It was almost impossible for them to transport supplies overland to their western garrisons; and the women and children as well as the warriors of their savage allies must be fed, clothed, and supplied with presents. As the Indian knew no mean between gorging and starvation, his appetite played havoc with ration tables. The necessity of keeping open communications on Lake Erie in 1813 compelled Barclay, the British com-

mander, to offer battle to Perry's fleet; and Perry's victory, brilliant and far reaching in results, compelled the British to abandon Detroit and enabled General Harrison to pursue their army into Canada and defeat it at the Thames.

Had the Americans used their advantage with the proper efficiency they should have gained permanent control of the upper lakes; but in 1814 the garrison at Mackinac beat off an American attack and later actually succeeded in capturing on Lake Huron the schooners it was made in. In June, 1813, General William Clark had occupied Prairie du Chien; and a force mainly of Canadians was sent to recapture and hold it under an able young officer, Lieutenant Bulger. They not only kept the Indians of the region attached to the British cause, but defeated two American expeditions sent up to retake the post; the second under Major Zachary Taylor. When the operations of 1814 closed both sides were making great efforts to secure the naval control of the lower lakes for the next year.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The territory of Illinois, which then included Wisconsin, was an important field of military operations; within the present state little occurred. Governor Ninian Edwards of Illinois territory waged a petty war of frontier forts and of raids on Indian towns within his territory. In 1813 Illinois and Missouri were placed under command of General Benjamin Howard of Missouri, much to Edwards' disgust, who aspired to rival as a soldier his neighbor Governor Harrison of Indiana. Under Howard's orders ranger companies were raised on the frontier and Fort Clark was established at Peoria.

In the Treaty of Ghent American diplomacy accomplished what American arms had been unable to effect. The British matched second rate diplomats against the ablest that America could produce; as a result they were defeated on their claim for a buffer Indian state in the Northwest, and the treaty did not repeat the clause of Jay's Treaty giving British subjects freedom of trade. It provided simply for the surrender of all conquests on both sides.

At resurrendering Mackinac with its control of the trade to the Americans Lieutenant Colonel McDonell, the British commandant at the post, and the fur trading companies alike protested bitterly. They enlarged on its importance to the trade, on the necessity of keeping it at all costs or at least keeping the Americans out of it; but all to no purpose. Secretary of State James Monroe knew its value as well as anyone and demanded its immediate return, and it was surrendered to the Americans July 18, 1815.

There followed one of those brief periods when the American government seems to act with superhuman intelligence and energy to repair long years of shortcoming. The Americans in the West played with rare skill upon the fact that the Indians of the West felt themselves once more abandoned by the British. They took advantage of the British preoccupation with the Waterloo

campaign of 1815. Acting swiftly in the years of 1815 and 1816 they prepared for the restoration of the old posts at Fort Dearborn, and the occupation of Prairie du Chien and Green Bay to cut off all possible routes of approach to Canada from the Indians west of Lake Michigan. British officials protested that the building of new posts in the Indian country was a violation of the treaty, but to no purpose. In the course of 1816 there were posts at Chicago, Prairie du Chien, Green Bay, Warsaw on the Mississippi River, Rock Island, and Peoria. In 1816 an act of Congress barred all aliens from the trade who did not obtain permits from American Indian agents. The British trader was finally excluded from the region. Astor's American Fur Company took over the remaining posts of the Northwest Company. The future of the trade was in American hands.

For the third time since 1782 the Indian had a right to feel himself abandoned by his British allies; and the Americans acquired an ascendancy they never again lost. New cession treaties were extorted; from the Sac and Foxes one confirming the St. Louis cession of 1804. With hard words to the Indians the American officers boasted that they had "thrown their British father on his back" and that his Indian children were left at the mercy of his enemies.

"My father," complained an Indian chief at Mackinac to the British, "I shall in the first place tell you how the Chiefs I sent to St. Louis were treated by the Big Knives Chief (Governor Clarke) on their arrival there being three Chiefs and several soldiers, they were seated in the circle with the other Indians, the American Chief in going around to shake hands, said that the men I had sent were unfit to talk with him, and that he must absolutely *see me* or my *Head War Chief The Black Hawk*, he added to my Brother, you must immediately send off messengers to tell Lemoite and the Black Hawk to repair to this place in the course of thirty days; *If they do not*, I will ascend the Mississippi *and find them*; those your nation who remain here will be guarded by soldiers, till your Head Chiefs obey my summons. If they are not here in thirty days their Blood will be spilt for their disobedience.

"Then addressing the Kickapoos, You have a choice, say you wish for war and we are ready, say you wish for Peace, and it shall be so—Ye Sauks, Kickapoos, Renards, Pottawattomies you see what you must do, you must never expect to see your English Father again, you have rendered yourselves miserable by following his advice by going to war with us. He did not this year ask you to embark in his Boats, to traverse the Lakes—We are going to build Forts on the Mississippi, we have driven your English Father from thence and from Michillimackinac, you are miserable, you will not have an English Trader amongst you; *how can they come?*

"All this time and while the council lasted guns



were pointed at my chiefs (continued LeMoite) and as often as the American chief the Red Head (meaning Governor Clarke) spoke harsh to them, several other tribes who were present would yell with joy, which makes me much ashamed as they were principally our Enemies from the Missouri——<sup>1</sup>

In his despatches of 1815 and 1816 Lieutenant Colonel McDonell interpreted the American policy. He believed the Americans were trying to provoke the Indians to hostilities that would put them outside the treaty; for unsupplied with powder they were at the mercy of their enemies.

"I have taken every precaution," he wrote, "to make known the news of Peace, & to put a stop to that predatory mode of warfare, which they are continually waging against the Americans. To effect this *entirely* among so many tribes, having such cause to hate that people, need not be expected. The Gov't of the United States therefore, will soon have a fair pretext to glut their vengeance against them & gradually to root them out. They will probably stop all Powder from going to the Mississippi (when they get this place) without which, these nations must perish in the winter; the slow but sure poison of their whisky stills, will effect the rest, and in fifty years time, there perhaps will not be an Indian left between this and the Rocky Mountains, to plague either party."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Collections*, vol. 16, p. 194 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104. McDonell to Foster, May 15, 1815.



In these words Lieutenant Colonel McDonell wrote the epitaph of the Indians of the Northwest. The British still tried to hold out a hand to their old allies; General Lewis Cass had to order tribesmen in Michigan to pull down British flags from their lodges; Black Hawk and his band continued to make pilgrimages to Malden for British presents and advice till their overthrow in 1832; but these things could not even retard the displacement of the Indian by the white. The possession of the Northwest Territory and with it of the Illinois had passed to the hands that had held the title; its exploitation was destined to be under American institutions.

## CHAPTER V

### THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS

**F**ROM the passage of the Ordinance of 1787 Illinois had a definite political relation to the United States in theory; and with the arrival of Governor St. Clair of the Northwest Territory at Kaskaskia March 5, 1790, the theory became translated into fact; but for many years to come the Illinois country was on the edge of the government thus created. Till 1800 it was a part of the Northwest Territory; from 1800 to 1809 it was a part of Indiana Territory; and only with the creation of Illinois Territory in 1809 and with subsequent statehood in 1818 did it recover a measurable control of its destinies. Its politics throughout the period seem petty factional and personal quarrels; and the only distinguishable motif that runs throughout is the slavery issue.

Slavery gives point to most of the politics of the territory and state from 1787 to 1824. After 1787 the French inhabitants, alarmed by the reports that the Ordinance had abolished slavery, were moving with their slaves across the river to Spanish territory, until they were reassured by St. Clair's decision that the antislavery clause of the

Ordinance did not apply to slaves already held in the territory. It was the desire to overturn the Ordinance and introduce new slaves that led in 1809 to the division of Indiana Territory and the setting off of Illinois. The first constitution of Illinois, protecting the holding of indentured servants marks a compromise, a breathing space in the struggle between slavery and freedom. Not till 1824 did the six years of contest out of which had emerged the statehood of Illinois and the Missouri Compromise, bring forth the definitive decision that thenceforth Illinois was to be free.

What little we know of Illinois from 1789 to 1800 is recorded in the history of government of the Northwest Territory. April 27, 1790, St. Clair set off the county of St. Clair with boundaries including all Illinois south of the Illinois River and west of a line drawn from the mouth of Mackinaw River to Fort Massiac on the Ohio. Official records tell us that one of the judges of the Northwest Territory, George Turner, took part in the old controversy between Kaskaskia and Cahokia, ordering the records of the local court to be kept at Kaskaskia; to settle the difficulty in 1795 the county of Randolph was created with Kaskaskia for its county seat. Till 1798 the Governor and the three federal judges legislated for the Northwest Territory, supposedly selecting laws from the codes of the older

states. When the territory passed to the second state of territorial government and had a legislature with an elected lower house, St. Clair county sent the senior Shadrach Bond and Randolph county John Edgar to sit among the twenty-three representatives. The laws passed by this legislature in 1799-1800 reenacted by territorial and state legislatures in Indiana and Illinois formed the basis of the Illinois code for thirty years to come; but one wonders how far some of them were ever enforced. Laws for the settlement of the poor which prohibited their free movement; laws that unmarried insolvent debtors must work out their debts in seven years' servitude for their creditors, match strangely with a frontier community on the edge of the wilderness.

It must not however be forgotten that the government over the Illinois in this period was more aristocratic than it ever has been since. The officials sent out by Congress to govern successively the Northwest, Indiana, and Illinois Territories were accorded the position and consideration of gentlemen. The men who led the opposition to them claimed likewise to be gentlemen. And the rank and file of the population of the territory willingly conceded gentlemen the right of political leadership. Under the Northwest Ordinance the suffrage was restricted to the small group of freeholders. While it was subsequently extended, not

until the Jacksonian revolution in Illinois was the control of the aristocrats of the territorial period finally discarded.

Of the actual life of the Illinois country when it was a part of the Northwest Territory we know little or nothing. The handful of French inhabitants was being supplemented by a handful of American frontiersmen. They lived a rude life in picketed "stations"; some of them forgot all religious training, while others welcomed the first volunteer Methodist and Baptist preachers who came in. As early as 1787 the Baptist James Smith preached in the Illinois. The first Baptist church was founded at New Design in 1796. The first Methodist preacher, Reverend Joseph Lillard, appeared in 1793. In 1803 Benjamin Young was assigned to ride the circuit in the Illinois. Roman Catholic priests only occasionally visited the land that had witnessed the labors of Marquette, Allouez and Meurin. By 1800 there were perhaps 2,500 souls almost evenly divided between French and Americans within the present state. In 1806 there were 4,300 in Illinois and the present Wisconsin. In 1812 there were 12,282.

Increase was doubtless retarded by the slow evolution of the government's machinery for disposing of the public lands. The Act of 1796, providing for sales at two dollars an acre on a

year's credit in tracts not less than 640 acres, placed the land beyond the reach of the average frontier farmer. In 1800 William Henry Harrison, as delegate to Congress from the Northwest Territory, had secured a more liberal measure which permitted sales in 320 acre tracts with a credit extending over four years. In 1804 lands in Indiana Territory, of which Illinois was a part, were sold in 160 acre tracts.

This legislation in practice did not help the dwellers in the future state of Illinois because before the federal government could begin surveys and sales of public land it had to determine what claims to land under ancient French grants and under its own promises of donations were actually binding on it. In 1788 Congress had granted 400 acres to each French head of a family resident in 1783; in 1791 it had extended the grant to all resident heads of families in 1783 and added a grant of 100 acres to each militiaman not benefited by other grants; further, it had confirmed all holdings, no matter how shaky in title, if they had been improved in good faith. In confirming titles by grants and donation rights Governor St. Clair had been lavish and careless; Governor Harrison of Indiana Territory for a time was as bad. The greater part of the French inhabitants had long since despaired of realizing on Congress promises and had sold their rights

for a song to aggressive American speculators like John Edgar and the Morrisons. Many claims put forward by those and other men seemed to require examination.

The investigation of a commission into the mass of titles, confirmed and unconfirmed, produced startling results. Not only had the speculators bought up numerous French claims good, bad, and indifferent; they had actually manufactured false headright and improvement claims, basing them on affidavits sworn to wholesale by bibulous Frenchmen under the influence of brandy, and had transferred the claims to themselves by fraudulent conveyances. So complicated was the problem, and so bitter the opposition to investigation that it was not until 1809 that the commission reported and not till 1810 that the acceptance of the report by Congress cleared the way for the survey of townships and the sale of quarter sections at the land offices of Shawneetown and Kaskaskia.

The investigations into land frauds probably had their influence on the development of political parties in the territory. The period, whether blessed or not, in which Illinois had no history, had passed. Barely had William Henry Harrison, now governor of Indiana Territory, arrived at Vincennes on January 10, 1801, than the contest between Harrison and anti-Harrison



parties opened. In the Illinois country, Edgar and the Morrisons, the speculating interests, ranged themselves against the governor. Among the governor's friends were the Shadrach Bonds, uncle and nephew, Dr. George Fisher, and Pierre Menard, an able and benevolent Frenchman born in Canada who had come to the territory in 1790. Both factions in the beginning were proslavery as was Harrison himself. They were reduced to differing as to the method of overruling the prohibition in the Northwest Ordinance, and introducing slaves. Harrison's following sponsored petitions to Congress for the relaxation of the ordinance; in 1796 and 1800 the Illinois country had so petitioned without effect. In 1802 Harrison summoned a convention of the territory which drew up a memorial to Congress asking among other things admission of slaves for ten years. A committee of Congress finally reported favorably on it, but nothing was done. Meanwhile, in 1803 Harrison and the territorial judges had adopted an indenture law allowing negroes to be indentured and brought into the territory to serve long terms of years.

The anti-Harrison element at first advocated proceeding to the second stage of territorial government as a means of getting a delegate in Congress to voice the plea for slavery. In 1804 Harrison swung around to support the proposal; and



SHADRACK BOND  
[Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Library]  
(1773—1830)



his opponents, placing party before consistency, changed their positions and opposed the measure they had before advocated. Harrison's proposal carried in a popular vote, and a pro-Harrison lower house of the legislature was elected with George Fisher, William Biggs, and Shadrach Bond, members from the two Illinois counties. In 1805 and in 1807 this body passed indenture laws under which whole families of negroes down to the babe at the breast were indentured to long terms of servitude. The same years saw repeated a series of petitions from the legislature and the inhabitants of the Illinois for a modification of the Ordinance to permit slavery. Congressional committees reported them favorably but did no more.<sup>1</sup>

In 1807 the question approached the crisis. The elevation of Bond and Fisher to the territorial council had left their seats in the lower house to be filled. The new members were John Rice Jones and John Messenger, both of the anti-Harrison faction. Indiana proper was no longer agreed on the subject of slavery; men with anti-slavery sentiments had begun to settle in Dearborn county; in 1805 they had petitioned Congress

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<sup>1</sup> There is a tradition that they were blocked by Jefferson, who twenty years before had dispatched James Lemen to the Illinois making a secret compact with him that they would work together to keep slavery out of the Northwest. The tradition rests on documents of questionable authenticity and is belied by signatures of James Lemen to certain proslavery memorials.

to be annexed to the free state of Ohio. They hoped that if the proslavery bloc of the Illinois country was detached from the territory that they might be able to turn the balance in favor of freedom. The Edgar-Morrison group had for some time been working for separation from Indiana; in 1803 they sought to have the Illinois villages annexed to the newly purchased Louisiana territory across the Mississippi; in 1805, 1806, and 1808, they had petitioned for the erection of a separate territory in Illinois; the last of the three petitions being opposed in a counter petition of the Harrison group.

The session of 1808 saw a political bargain for the election of Jesse B. Thomas, the Dearborn county member as territorial delegate to Congress, under pledge to work for the division of the territory. As Thomas was a slippery politician the Illinois members took his bond for specific performance of the bargain. All worked out as expected. February 9, 1809, Congress set off Illinois Territory, including the present state of Wisconsin. As a fitting commentary on the factional strife that led up to the division, Rice Jones, the younger, was assassinated on the street of Kaskaskia, and the anti-Harrison speculating group tried to fix complicity in the murder on their enemy, Michael Jones, the land commissioner.

Fortunately, the organization of the new Illinois Territory was with one exception entrusted to new men. Jesse B. Thomas came back as territorial judge, but his colleagues, Alexander Stuart and Obediah Jones, soon replaced by Stanley Griswold were strangers. So was the secretary, Nathaniel Pope, and his relative the new governor, Ninian Edwards of Kentucky. Edwards adroitly refused to take sides with either faction, and based his appointments to office so far as he could on popular referenda. In 1812 the territory voted almost unanimously to proceed to the second grade of territorial government; and Congress in 1812 extended the suffrage to all adult males resident a year and paying taxes; for the older freehold requirement would have barred the majority of the population. In October of 1812 the junior Shadrach Bond was elected delegate to Congress and a territorial legislature was chosen.

The only measure at issue in the local politics of Illinois Territory concerned the legislature's attempt to regulate the terms of court held by the federal judges; ultimately it gave up the struggle and created courts independent of those provided by the federal government. But the history of Indiana Territory repeated itself in the formation of political factions for and against the governor. Some men such as Pierre Menard and the Bonds were neutral. Young men like Elias Kent



Kane and John McLean, who came to the territory to seek their fortunes, joined the opposition; others like Pope's relative, Daniel Pope Cook, gathered round Edwards.

The close of the War of 1812 saw a rapid development in Illinois. Harbingers of civilized community life such as newspapers appeared. In 1814 the *Illinois Herald* was founded at Kaskaskia, continuing under several changes of name. In 1818 at Shawneetown, now the natural gateway to Illinois from the east, Peter Kimmel founded the *Illinois Emigrant*. Population flooded into the territory. By 1818 it seemed quite possible that statehood was attainable. Daniel Pope Cook in 1817 began a campaign for it in the *Western Intelligencer* as the *Illinois Herald* was then called. Opinion seemed to favor the measure and in Congress Nathaniel Pope as territorial delegate introduced a bill for an enabling act.

The result is a high tribute to Pope's political skill. He managed to maneuver the bill through both houses; the best testimony to his address is the fact that a similar bill concerning Missouri was introduced too late and failed of passage. The terms obtained for Illinois were most liberal: of the proceeds of government sales of land within her borders Illinois was to have 3 per cent for education and 2 per cent to be expended by Con-



gress for roads leading to the state. In addition she received section 16 in each township for schools, a whole township for a seminary of learning, and all salt licks. Her northern boundary instead of being the east and west line through the foot of Lake Michigan, as the Northwest Ordinance prescribed, was set as it now stands, some sixty miles farther north. Pope in advocating the change in the terms of the ordinance emphasized the importance of giving the new state a footing on the Great Lakes and territorial proximity to both north and south. At present the importance of the change secured by Pope is best measured by the fact that 55 per cent of Illinois population lies in the territory he secured. In the days of the slavery struggle the voters of the section turned the tide for the election of Lincoln.<sup>1</sup>

The enabling act once passed, a Constitutional Convention was speedily elected. It began its labors August 3 and concluded them 23 days after. With but little difficulty it framed a very rudimentary government in which practically all of the legislative and most of the appointive power was placed in the General Assembly. Territorial experience with governors and judiciaries united with current political theory to leave the

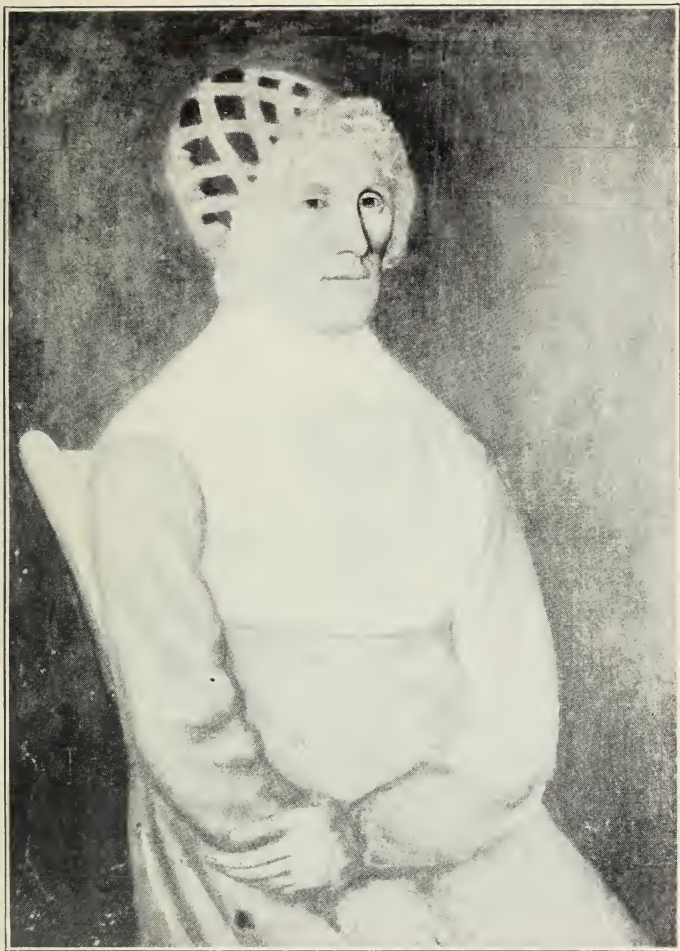
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<sup>1</sup> Lincoln carried the state in 1860 by 12,000 votes plurality. His plurality in the district must have been over 25,000.

judiciary subject to the regulation of the legislature, and to intrust to the governor and judges sitting as a Council of Revision only a veto power that could be and usually was overridden by a majority of members elected to the legislature.

Again the slavery question was the burning one. Slavery and antislavery had been the issue in the elections to the convention; both sides had filled the newspapers with their articles. The antislavery party lost the elections, but prudence lest Congress refuse to accept the constitution made its provisions on slavery nondescript. It confirmed the territorial indentures but prohibited the further introduction of slavery. Without submission to a popular vote the constitution came before Congress. There, with the Missouri struggle impending, northern men challenged the Illinois constitution as a violation of the ordinance; but on December 3, 1818, Illinois was formally admitted to the Union.

For six years more in the state slavery remained the great political issue. The Missouri struggle that began in the very session in which the Illinois representatives first took their seats riveted men's attention to the course of their representatives on the question. John McLean, the state's first congressman, was defeated for reelection by Cook on the issue of McLean's vote for the admission of Missouri as a slave state.



MRS. SHADRACK BOND  
[Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Library]



Ninian Edwards and Jesse B. Thomas were the state's senators, and both were on the side of slavery. To Thomas was entrusted the introduction in the senate of the famous amendment embodying the Missouri Compromise providing for the admission of Missouri as a slave state on condition that slavery be barred from the rest of the Louisiana Territory north of thirty-six degrees and thirty minutes. A strong opposition to both men developed because of their proslavery attitude.

The victory of the slavery forces on the Missouri question apparently encouraged the advocates of slavery in Illinois. Repeatedly it had been said in debate that the Northwest Ordinance prohibition of slavery could not bind a sovereign state after its admission to the Union. A slave state across the river from Illinois, already dominating Illinois trade from its metropolis of St. Louis, would attract away the well-to-do southern emigrants so long as Illinois remained free. Young men of means in a frontier community resented the fact that their wives for want of domestic help had to toil at household tasks and hoped for a state of things in which house maids would be a purchasable commodity. Missourians, indignant that antislavery sentiment in Illinois had meddled with their domestic concern of slavery, planned to retaliate. The Shawneetown

saline required labor to build fires and carry water; and Adolphus F. Hubbard reminded the Illinois legislature that these were duties for which divine providence had pointed out the negro. A campaign for the amendment of the Illinois constitution to admit slavery was soon under way.

Much turned on the election for governor in 1822. Four candidates were in the field. Of them Judge Joseph Phillips was proslavery, James B. Moore perhaps antislavery, Thomas C. Browne, nondescript, and Edward Coles, a stiff Virginian of the Jeffersonian school, lately come to Illinois, avowedly antislavery; by a narrow margin Coles was elected.

A resolution submitting to the people the calling of a convention to amend the constitution came up in the General Assembly of 1822-23. In the Senate the proslavery forces had the necessary two-thirds majority. In the House at first they lacked it by one vote. There was, however, a contested election in Pike county between John Shaw and Nicholas Hansen; the technical merits of the contest are in doubt. But Hansen was seated early in the session, apparently to get a vote against Ninian Edwards for United States Senator. When Hansen voted against the convention resolution, the House by a majority vote reopened the question of his election, reversed



its former decision, seated John Shaw in his stead, and with Shaw's vote passed the resolution.

A two years' campaign before the people began at once. Coles by his position the leader of the anticonvention forces, drew to his aid Morris Birkbeck, the English radical, who had sought in Illinois a refuge from the aristocratic control of English politics, and had been one of the founders of the English settlement in Edwards county. Other antislavery men rallied to them. The *Edwardsville Spectator*, although its editor, Hooper Warren, was personally hostile to Coles, became the antislavery organ; soon the antislavery men gained control of the *Illinois Intelligencer*. Eastern Quakers contributed antislavery pamphlets for distribution. In newspapers and public meetings two years' incessant argument ran on. The Jonathan Freeman letters of Birkbeck are the ablest contribution to the controversy; they were intended to drive home to the small farmer the fact that the presence of slaves in the community would be a degradation of the dignity of labor and of the man who worked with his hands. On religious, on economic, on moral grounds the argument was waged for and against; in the election of 1824 the people registered their verdict against the calling of a convention by a vote of 6,640 to 4,972.

With 1824 the slavery issue disappeared from



Illinois politics so completely that in future years the advocates of a convention like Kane, Kinney, and McLean fared far better in politics than the men like Coles and Birkbeck who opposed it. The search for a reason for this last fact brings us to the exigencies of factional politics in the state. The Edwards and anti-Edwards factions as such had not taken sides in the convention struggle; and factional alliances were in the twenties the most potent factors in making or marring men's political fortunes.

For about ten years after the admission of Illinois to the Union the Edwards and anti-Edwards factions had contested the control of the state. In 1818 they seem to have reached a tacit agreement on a division of the offices. Bond and Menard at that time allied with neither group became governor and lieutenant-governor; indeed with such a disposal of offices in view the constitutional convention had for Menard's special benefit modified the citizenship qualification for lieutenant-governor. Of the anti-Edwards faction, Kane became secretary of state and Thomas senator; of the Edwards group Edwards was elected senator and Pope was appointed federal judge. In the only contest of anti-Edwards and Edwards men McLean beat Cook for Congress.

The party contests between the factions do not seem usually to have been carried into elections

for the state legislature; there the personal popularity of the candidates, save when the slavery issue was introduced, determined the result. The main contests between the factions before the people came in the successive elections for Congress in which year by year Cook defeated one after another the strongest candidates of the anti-Edwards group; McLean in 1820, Kane in 1822, Bond in 1824.

Meanwhile in the Senate Edwards, now Cook's father-in-law, was engaged in a bitter quarrel with Jesse B. Thomas, partly at least over patronage. The presidential question also entered in. Ever since 1817 the candidates had been groomed for the succession to Monroe in 1824. Henry Clay of Kentucky, William H. Crawford of Georgia, John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, De Witt Clinton of New York, and Andrew Jackson of Tennessee stood out as candidates, dividing the Illinois state factions into partisan groups. Of the two senators Thomas was for Crawford and Edwards for Calhoun. Edwards, throwing himself too hotly into the war on Crawford, was caught contributing to a Washington paper anonymous articles signed "A. B." attacking Crawford's relations as secretary of the treasury with western banks; he resigned from the senate in 1824 under a cloud.

The presidential election of 1824 was hotly contested in Illinois. That of 1820, the first in which the state had taken part, had been a foregone conclusion for Monroe, and had excited no interest save among candidates for elector to vote for Monroe. Now, Jackson, Clay, Adams, and Crawford all had their candidates for elector in the field in the three electoral districts into which the state was then divided. The result was close, and marked by sharp jockeying on all sides. Jackson electors were chosen in two districts, an Adams elector in the third. Cook, however, believed he had received a mandate for no candidate and when as sole congressman for Illinois he had to cast her vote in the House of Representatives voting by states, he cast it for John Quincy Adams—an act that was to plague him thereafter.

In 1826 Ninian Edwards determined to seek rehabilitation for his part in the A. B. scandal by seeking election as governor. At the same time his son-in-law, Cook, was running for a fourth successive term in Congress, under the supposed handicap of having disregarded the expressed will of his constituents in casting the vote of Illinois for Adams rather than for Jackson. But heavier than this weighed upon both father-in-law and son-in-law their relationship and the fact that they avowedly stood forth as leaders and candidates of a faction. They were opposed by two young

men late comers to the state and not in the popular mind connected with either faction, though both doubtless had the full support of the anti-Edwards group. In the event Edwards beat Thomas Sloo, Jr., by but a few hundred votes, and Cook was defeated by Joseph Duncan, a young Kentucky veteran of the War of 1812. Cook did not survive his defeat a year.

With this election the first era of Illinois politics comes to an end. The slavery question for over a generation had been the one real issue; for almost a generation men had acquiesced in seeing the spoils of office contended for by political factions aristocratic in their leadership based frankly on family alliances and personal likes and dislikes. In one form or another these factions had influenced Illinois elections for the first eight years of statehood, and at length people were weary of them. In the defeat of Cook and the unexpectedly close election of Edwards they showed their disgust.

A new system of politics was slowly emerging, a system in which national issues and national parties would divide the voters and make the Illinois whig nearer akin to the New England one than to the Illinois democrat. The period of close party organization and of loyalty to national parties was at hand. In these years the sense was developing that it was for the people to de-

cide on political questions, to elect their party leaders, and to control their party machinery. All this was the antithesis of the system of aristocratic political factions represented by Edwards and Cook. In 1826 the voters of the state registered their disapproval, but eight years were to elapse before the old factions had completely disintegrated and the new democratic and whig parties had come in their stead.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE FRONTIER

**B**ETWEEN the establishment of the first English trading posts to the west of the Alleghanies about the year 1740 and the formal announcement of the United States Census Bureau in 1890 that the frontier had disappeared we count a century and a half. In it a mighty flood of population recruited from the older America and from most of Europe had spread over an area of three million square miles of swamp, prairie, oak barren, forest, mountain, desert and plain, had laid hold of whatever land was immediately fitted for the use of man, and had established upon it thirty-one commonwealths, fused into one great nation. Such an achievement the world has not before recorded. Part and parcel of it, representing a certain stage of progress in it, in some details resembling the rest of the movement, in others unique is the founding and development of Illinois.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the interior valleys of the Alleghanies were a seething trough in which was forming a mixture of Anglo Saxons, Scotchmen for a few generations resident



in Ireland but not of it, and Germans driven from their homes by the wars and persecutions of the eighteenth century. From New York and Pennsylvania and the colonies farther south the human elements poured in, tending ever westward and southward. The chance of travel might separate members of the same family by a thousand miles till of the stock that entered the valley at the north in 1740 a half century later traces might be found all the way to Georgia. By 1740 the flood was already surging up the western barrier of the Alleghanies. The Seven Years War—the French and Indian War as America named it—for a time restrained it; the Proclamation of 1763 and the British ministerial prohibition restrained it a little longer; but by 1774 the trickles of population running out into Kentucky were becoming torrents. By the time of the adoption of the Federal Constitution fifteen years later Kentucky was already a populous state. Tennessee was ready for admission to the union in 1796. Six years later Ohio was admitted. The western tide flowed on, more slowly till after the War of 1812, then with a rush which within five years of the Treaty of Ghent brought five new western states into the union: Indiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Missouri, and Illinois. It is at this stage and for the succeeding generation that the human torrent engages our especial interest. It defies de-



scription. Eddying in it were specimens of distinct social strata, distinct modes of life, thought and opinions; from year to year, from district to district, its outward appearance varied. But some generalization about it and the economic, social and political organizations it developed in Illinois, inevitably inaccurate, must be attempted.

Long before 1818 new settlers were converging on Illinois from different directions. They came from North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, even from New England. At this period, however, the Ohio was the main highway to the state and Shawneetown its gateway. Drifting down the Ohio on flat boats large enough to house a settler's horses and cattle, before 1796 equipped with log breastworks against the lurking Indians; steered down in later years in keel boat or steamboat the emigrants came. A few of them found their way across the Wabash from Indiana, a few came by the roads or rivers of western Kentucky converging on the Ohio and merely crossed it to reach the state; but the main travel in the early years was by the Ohio. Later, the rivers were supplemented by the Cumberland Road, the great national highway from Wheeling on the Ohio across the states of Ohio and Indiana, and by other land routes. Along them passed the emigrant wagons loaded with the "plunder" of

the newcomers, their horses and their cattle.

The classes that traveled the routes to the West were diverse as might be. The first comer was the typical outlier of civilization, imbued with the love for the wilderness; a lone wolf, often scarcely more than a savage, with a savage's cruelty, ignorance and superstition. Men of this type flitted before the advancing tide of settlement. After them came the squatter, stopping a year or five years in a place to build a cabin, and clear a few acres of corn for his family to supplement the spoils of his rifle, until he sold his improvements to a more permanent settler and moved on. Sometimes he was shiftless and indolent, sometimes he was merely cursed with a poverty that would not permit him to buy land of his own. A fortunate sale of his improvements, a year or two of lucrative wages paid him by a wealthier settler and he might succeed in entering a tract of land and become a solid member of the community.

After the squatter came the farmer, the man with stock or capital who did not settle on any land save what he owned or expected to be able to buy. Primitive in his first living arrangements on the frontier, he kept in his mind the ideal of approximating as soon as possible to the comforts of his old home back East. Like the squatter his household arrangements in the West might begin with a half faced camp of logs rolled up to afford

shelter on three sides with an open fire on the fourth to which the sleeping family stretched its feet for warmth; but this was speedily to be succeeded with the farmer by the single or double log cabin, with puncheoned floors, chinked walls, and finally, efficient doors and windows. The small caliber rifle, the spinning wheel, wool cards, and heavy plow were the essential adjuncts. A few bits of finer portable furniture might recall the comforts of the old home. The clock was a sufficiently important adjunct to erect clock peddling into a separate calling, recognized by Illinois law. The farmer of the type outlined was the backbone of the new community.

Rising above him in gentility of birth and breeding, in good social position, in education were the young men who came to the frontier to seek a fortune. Notable examples were Ninian Edwards who abandoned a Kentucky judgeship in 1809 to take the governorship of Illinois Territory and make a fortune in land and trade, and Elias Kent Kane of a good New York family, a Yale graduate, who came on a similar errand and at length became the Jacksonian leader in the state.

In the little frontier towns all these elements rubbed elbows. Such places as Shawneetown, Kaskaskia, Edwardsville were little communities with a few brick and many more log buildings,

set in streets of bottomless mud where lawless backwoodsmen and keelboatmen turned Sunday into a day of revelry. Yet in their streets the fine lady might encounter the squatter's wife, and the lone wolf trapper the young college graduate alert for a land speculation.

The stores of these villages advertised not only the hardware, rifles, powder, blankets, rough stuffs and calicoes demanded by the frontiersman, and the squatter and his wife, but the fine wines, brandies, cigars, lemons, spices, boxed sweetmeats, the silver tea services, and jewelry, the broadcloths, linens, silks, and laces to which the more aristocratic classes were accustomed. The advertisements of the stores are an index to the diverse standards of life of the frontier community.

The towns such as these were the centers of the little commercial life of the early twenties. Their stores sold wholesale to storekeepers in the little outlying hamlets, Golconda, Carmi, Vienna. Of local customers they took produce in exchange for goods—furs, skins, honey, corn, whisky, venison hams, barrelled beef and pork, and shipped the produce to New Orleans by flatboat, keelboat or steamboat on their own account. Often farmers would consign produce to them on commission. Sometimes a farmer would build a flatboat, freight it with his produce and with a

neighbor's boy or two to man it float down the Wabash or Illinois to the market at New Orleans. The merchant's notions of merchandising were not modern. Apparently a man pricing goods was expected to buy. The glass of whisky sealed every trade even to the smallest, and a dram shop was called a grocery. In the Lincoln-Douglas debates Lincoln thought it necessary to deny Douglas' description of him as a prominent grocery keeper of the earlier day. Sales were on long credits, and newspapers were filled with advertisements calling on delinquent debtors to settle at once. The storekeeper in turn bought on long credit in Baltimore, Norfolk or Philadelphia; in the thirties New York merchants sent out traveling salesmen to the west; occasionally merchants in places convenient to Lake Michigan made the trip to New York to select their stocks, and gathered tales to relate at home of the theaters, the beauties, the dandies, and the fast trotting horses of Broadway.

This trade meager as it was was carried on in spite of a circulating medium rather than with it. The twenties were cursed with a financial problem that was never solved partly because it was never understood. Illinois in the days of early statehood suffered like every other young community for lack of capital. Money was needed to buy from the East the hardware and

the other goods necessary to establish civilization in the West. What good money there was drained speedily out of the country to pay debts owed to the East or by way of the government land offices to the eastern branches of the Bank of the United States. Against its additional debts to the East incurred for goods brought at ruinous transportation charges across the mountains and down the Ohio, it could set only the credits due it for produce shipped to New Orleans. But the produce that the West poured down the Mississippi was more than New Orleans could use or export: surplus foodstuffs piled on its wharves; beef and pork salted with the cheap western salt instead of the fine imported article spoiled in the sun. Above all, the exchange mechanism furnished the country by the Second Bank of the United States and its branches did not enable the credits accumulated by the West at New Orleans to be set off against the debts it owed to the East. Financial ruin stared the West in the face.

It is difficult by mere description to make clear how bad was the currency situation in the West. There banks had sprung up, good, bad, and indifferent in response to the crying need of the country for capital, misunderstood as a need for more money. Money these banks provided in the form of bank notes and credits; the former mingled with the flood of notes from eastern



banks of all the reverse degrees of excellence circulating to deceive the ignorant at twenty different discounts. In those days counterfeiting was merely an offense against state law. There was no federal secret service to track down counterfeiters, and counterfeit notes of genuine banks, notes of imaginary banks, genuine notes of failed banks all added to the confusion. Many of the state banks established in the Northwest states were badly managed; sometimes they persuaded farmers and merchants to take loans they never could hope to repay in order to take possession of their lands and business by foreclosure. The Second Bank of the United States and its branches were in this respect as great offenders as any. They sought first to harass the state banks by presenting their notes for specie redemption; after June, 1818, the Bank of the United States refused to accept the notes of western banks deposited with it by government land office receivers except for collection.

Secretary of the Treasury Crawford had labored at the problem with a patience and wisdom for which he has not been given due credit. Confronted by the refusal of the United States Bank to function as fiscal agent in the West, Crawford sought to keep the machinery of finance running by selecting western banks of fair repute as government depositories, requiring them to



transmit at par to the East the notes of such western banks as they should notify the land officers they would accept. Crawford was accused by his foes, perhaps with truth, of granting favors in this way to his political allies. He was accused also of having lost some money in government deposits in failed banks; but it is a question whether he did not save in this way government funds not otherwise recoverable, and give some alleviation to the hardships of the West.

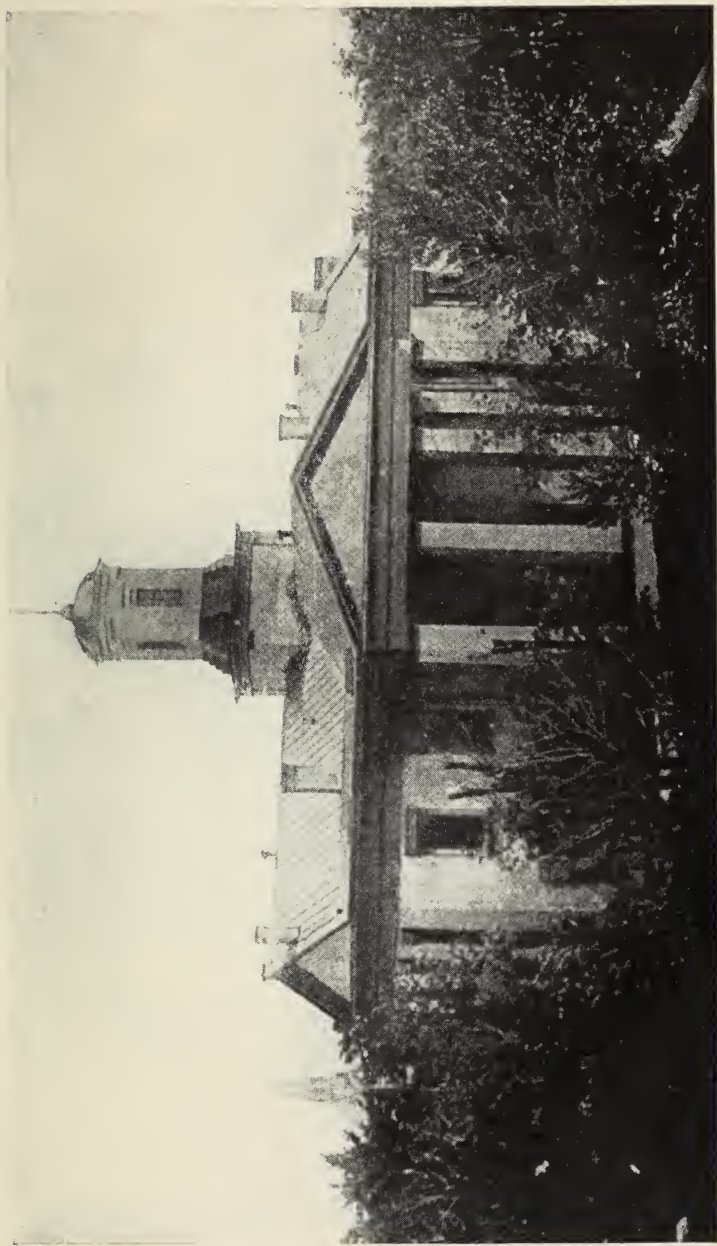
Unfortunately by 1822 the whole scheme was dropped. Meanwhile Illinois had sought relief for the inability of her citizens to get advances to repay their loans and for the general shortage of money by the creation of a state bank. The legislature in 1819 authorized one by an act which failed to go into effect. In 1821 it created another with branches, ostensibly to loan money to citizens who needed it! The unconstitutionality of the bank under the clause of the Federal constitution forbidding a state to issue bills of credit was so patent that the bank dared not sue to collect from its debtors. Its notes depreciated, the legislature tried to maintain them by making them receivable for taxes and the state suffered heavy financial loss before it finally got rid of them. Of the earlier state chartered banks the bank at Edwardsville had failed and the Bank of Illinois at Shawneetown had suspended busi-

ness. The whole experience of the twenties left a latent distrust of paper money and a latent impression that banks were leeches to suck the blood of the farmer. In local trade barter replaced the use of money of any kind. All these things were to play their part in the support accorded Jackson in his war on the United States Bank, and the movement of the forties against banks and "bank rags" in general.

The commerce, trade and finance of the new state were, however, slight things beside the exploitation of its land and the making of farms and homes upon it. To understand this a brief consideration of the federal land laws is necessary. Since 1812 lands had been purchased at government land offices in Illinois, first at Shawneetown and Kaskaskia, later at Edwardsville also, in tracts of 160 acres at a minimum rate of two dollars an acre, of which amount one-fourth was payable down and the rest in payments extending over four years. The theory on which this policy had been adopted in a series of federal acts beginning with 1800 was that the farmer could thus pay for his land out of the first four crops. Actually such a thing was almost impossible. Farmers had taken advantage of the act to get farms; but speculators also had used it to acquire options on choice tracts at 50 cents an acre on the chance of selling at a profit before

further payments were due. Disappointed hopes filled the West with debtors to the government who could not and would not pay and who were too numerous to be dispossessed. In 1820 Congress, in spite of the protests of speculators, abolished the whole credit system and provided for cash sales at one dollar and a quarter an acre, after each tract had been put up at auction. Very little land was bought in Illinois for ten years thereafter. Meanwhile the government in a series of relief acts offered to the delinquent purchasers full title to an amount of land equivalent to the sums they had actually paid in.

The land speculator was at work in Illinois from the beginning. Young men came to seek their fortunes in the territory, with money to invest by entering fertile tracts, mill seats or possible town sites. Town sites especially offered on every side; advertisements in every newspaper detailed the advantages of these future emporiums of trade. The competition between town site speculators when the convention of 1818 was in session in Illinois led the convention to locate the state's second capital at Vandalia in the wilderness where the state might reap the profit from the sale of town lots. Eastern speculators worked through Western agents or bought up claims of veterans of the War of 1812 to tracts of 160 acres in what is known as the Military Tract—



THE CAPITOL AT VANDALIA



the section between the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers.

Speculation in agricultural land of course was determined by the lands considered most desirable; and here the choice was a strange one. Eschewing the broad prairies except for grazing, men chose uplands heavily timbered with hard wood. This has been ascribed to the following syllogism; if land that will support the heavy growth of hardwood timber is better than scrub oak barren, scrub oak barren in turn must be better than land that grows no trees at all. The more likely reason is, paradoxical as it may seem, that a man by ax, by fire, and by neighborly assistance in a log rolling, by girdling trees and planting corn among the decaying stumps could accomplish more than he could on prairie land without a team of heavy oxen to turn the first tough sod. From 1818 Morris Birkbeck, the founder of the English settlement in Edwards county, Edward Coles, and others labored to teach their fellow citizens ways of dealing with the problem of the prairies.

Even, in the thirties, however, when population was sweeping over the prairies of Northwestern Illinois, there was still a problem. Breaking prairie cost several dollars an acre, splitting rails and putting up rail fences cost several dollars additional, more still if the necessary timber was

not close at hand. Even then, when men were locating farms on the prairie they took care to locate their homes on elevated ground near good water, and to take a part of the farm in timber. A man who located his entire farm on the prairie had to steal his timber for building and fencing from government land or the land of a nonresident. Speculators were able to keep control of great tracts by locating the fractional sections that covered timbered land along the water courses.

The attitude of men toward the land system varied from decade to decade. For ten years after 1820 little land was entered in southern Illinois. What few sales were made were in the central part of the state. Men either acquired title from speculators, or squatted on unsold government lands. In 1828 William Lee D. Ewing, the receiver of the Vandalia Land District, reported 1100 legal electors in the district and total sales since the beginning of 17,586 acres of land.

"The citizens of this country," he wrote, "are all aware of the discussions that have been had in Congress on the subject of the reduction of the price of those lands. They believe (which is very natural for them to do) that the price should be reduced; and finding, too, that they are supported in this opinion by many of our most enlightened legislators, and believing that efforts will again and again be made until the object be either



effected or totally defeated, they will not enter their lands, except in particular instances where places are found to possess some peculiar advantages; but will continue (as they have long done) to cultivate a still stronger faith in an understanding among themselves not to enter each other's improvements, nor to let any one else do it, until government affords them some relief in the shape of the reduction of the price of its lands.

This position may be more satisfactorily illustrated by the following facts:

—In the county of Clay there are about one hundred voting inhabitants, of whom there are not more than twenty freeholders.”<sup>1</sup>

The land policy appealing to western men as the ideal one was the policy advocated by Senator Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, known as graduation—the reduction year by year of the price of lands remaining unsold until finally having reached a price of twenty-five cents an acre they should be donated to the states. Joined with this was the right of actual settlers to preemption—the right to buy the lands on which they had settled at the minimum price. Of such a policy there was no chance so long as the East had the majority in Congress. It was twenty years before the Federal government permanently recognized the principle of preemption, ten more before it applied that of graduation on

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<sup>1</sup> *American State Papers, Public Lands*, vol. 5, p. 556.

unsold lands, and ten more before it adopted the homestead principle.

In Congress the West had to wage a long battle against New England and other sections that opposed western settlement, lest their population be drawn off, their lands depreciate in value and their manufacturers lack cheap lands. Western representatives, therefore, had to bargain for support where they could find it. For Southern support of a reasonably liberal land and Indian policy they had to sacrifice other things. The building of roads and canals and the improvement of rivers at government expense appealed to the westerners who desired better routes to carry their produce to market; similarly they desired a protective tariff to foster the household industries of nail making and weaving. Both these things could have been had by alliance with New England and the Northeast; both had to be sacrificed to conciliate the South.

In studying the intellectual and moral forces that played upon pioneer Illinois the striking thing is that the Illinoisan developed and improved for himself on his former habits. In the back country religion and religious organization, education and schools, politics and strong government did not follow close on the pioneer; he had to learn the need of them and to evolve them out of his past experience with a little assistance from organ-

izations back East: of such organizations he was essentially suspicious and borrowed as few as possible of their ideas.

As to religion, the first westward push outran it. Away from ministers and services, men forgot church and Sunday observance. The deism of the eighteenth century, denying the supernatural and indeed all save the moral teachings of Christianity, had shot through American life and thought. In the West it very often took the form of a sort of diabolism that rejected and opposed all organized religion as hypocritical and superstitious. Against it the churches had to contend for very life.

The Baptists were the first in the field. The Baptist church order, essentially congregational, made the organization of churches an easy affair. Every zealous lay preacher, no matter how ignorant, who migrated to the West, was the possible seed of a little Baptist church. The first in Illinois, at New Design, dates from 1796. Similar churches sprang up everywhere with little denominational connection, individually marked by strange and unorthodox beliefs—such a one as that of the anti-Mission Baptists who held attempts to convert men a rebellion against divine predestination that had decreed from the beginning the lost and the saved. The elements of order, coherence, and unity were first brought

among the scattered Baptist churches by such missionaries as John Mason Peck of Connecticut, founder of churches, Sunday schools, temperance societies, newspapers, of Shurtleff College at Alton, who labored some forty years slowly overcoming narrowness and distrust in the order.

Of the Protestant denominations the Methodists were next on the ground about the year 1801, but Methodism implied organization. Organized into circuits the Methodist church was an aristocracy presided over by bishops, ruled by the circuit riders who retained their voice in affairs so long as their devotion and their bodily strength enabled them to ride the bottomless roads, swim the rivers and preach with all the power of a rough oratory and a deep-seated conviction to the vast camp meeting audiences that gathered from near and far. Great natural orators like James Axley and Peter Cartwright when God's gifts were strong in them could sway multitudes like fields of grain in the wind till sinners by hundreds with shouts and cries were torn by spiritual agony to find at length spiritual peace.

Beneath the circuit riders were the settled, or superannuated ministers, and class leaders, without voice in the government of the church, but continually teaching and fortifying the converts and the faithful generally. Methodism in its earlier years preached simplicity in apparel and

life, the abandonment of dancing, card playing, and other frivolous amusements; its preachers withstood to the face the vice of drinking and the sin of slaveholding; in later years as Methodists waxed in wealth pioneers like Cartwright bewailed their growing laxity.

Presbyterianism was in Illinois at an early day, but as in the West, generally it increased slowly, mainly because of its insistence on an educated ministry to teach the Calvinist theology. By a bargain of 1800 with the Congregationalists known as the Plan of Union, the Presbyterians refrained from pushing their organization further in New England, and Congregationalists agreed that the two denominations should unite their missionary activities in the West and that Presbyterianism should be the form of organization there. Their set missionary activity aroused western distrust; their insistence on a learned ministry alarmed the simple Methodist and Baptist preachers; but they pushed on. Determined on having their educated preachers they dotted the West with their colleges such as Illinois College, Knox and Blackburn.

Congregationalism, however, had begun to creep in in defiance of the Plan of Union as New England emigrants accustomed to that form of church government came in the thirties. The stricter Presbyterians believed that the great Con-

gregational elements already absorbed by the Plan of Union did not take the Presbyterian discipline with due seriousness. Yale theology came to be in bad repute; finally in 1837 the conservative Princeton theologians, attracting the South to their support, drove the lax Presbyterians of the West out of the church. In Illinois and elsewhere the church divided into old school and new school, the New England and other theologically liberal elements either falling into the new school Presbyterian organization or becoming Congregationalist. The Plan of Union so far as it hindered the establishment of Congregational churches was abandoned; and Presbyterians and Congregationalists quarreled over colleges like Knox which they had formerly combined to establish.

Other denominations were active; the Disciples or Christians, made up of offshoots from the Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist orders, taking the Bible as their sole guide; the Cumberland Presbyterians, an offset from Presbyterianism in the great revivals at the beginning of the nineteenth century; and various others.

Roman Catholicism slowly made its way again into the land consecrated by the devotion of Marquette. In the last years of the eighteenth century and the first of the nineteenth there is no record of a priest in the Illinois. In the year 1809 the Trappist Fathers established themselves



on the great mound of Cahokia.<sup>1</sup> With the founding of the diocese of Bardstown, Kentucky, in 1808 priests again began their labors. Illinois was a part of Bardstown and of dioceses successively set off from it, Vincennes, St. Louis and Chicago, founded in 1844. The bishops struggled with the problem of finding competent priests to take charge of the scattered but growing flocks. The Irish who came to Illinois to labor on the works of internal improvement increased the number of the church; but its real development necessarily came with the great European migration after 1870.

As an intellectual force organized religion was relatively more important in the pioneer community than in the later day. The sermon, save for the political speech, was for the great mass of the population the only intellectual and emotional stimulus, the only example of creative art. Western christianity developed certain characteristics all its own. Thrown into a wilderness, compelled to do battle with openly hostile deism and unbelief, it became strenuous, vigorous, even violent. No Methodist circuit rider could hold a camp meeting unless by force of address he could cow the bullies who sought to break it up. Mocking a preacher on the road was good sport for ungodly

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<sup>1</sup> This fact gives rise to the name of Monks Mound by which it is sometimes known.



young people. Theological belief and religious convictions had to be backed by one's fists on occasion. The church had none of the protection afforded it by the conventions of polite society. Compelled to fight for life it fought to destroy its adversary. Intolerance was the fruit of the contest between religion and irreligion where the stakes were life and death.

The pioneer outran education also in his movement to the West, but this was not a serious matter. The English organization of society had long taken it for granted that the church was the means of education for the masses. In the southern states, from which the mass of Illinois' earlier population was drawn, there were no public school systems, and a large proportion of emigrants to the state were illiterate. The western states, however, were accorded one section in each township in their bounds for local schools; and in addition Illinois had a percentage from government land sales and a township of land for a seminary. Her pioneers came with divers opinions on the subject of the employment of this endowment. Some believed the lands should be sold at once that the present generation might be educated. Others thought they should be held as a great fund for the future. Southerners were averse to taxing rich men to educate poor men's sons, and only gradually as the northern elements came in was

school taxation established. A law of 1825 allowing localities to lay school taxes was repealed. Another such was not passed till 1845. The state appropriated the three per cent fund for other uses, paying interest on it to the schools; local land grants were rented and the rents used for local schools.

The earliest schools were most casual affairs. They were kept by drunkards, by men with the barest smattering of knowledge, unfitted for other purposes by physical or moral defects. Pupils studied whatever text books their families possessed and were taught out of them by primitive and brutal methods in which flogging played an important part. Schoolmasters ruled only by superior force. The barring out was a favorite custom, the pupils some day attempting to keep the master out until he capitulated and provided a treat in which whisky played an important part.

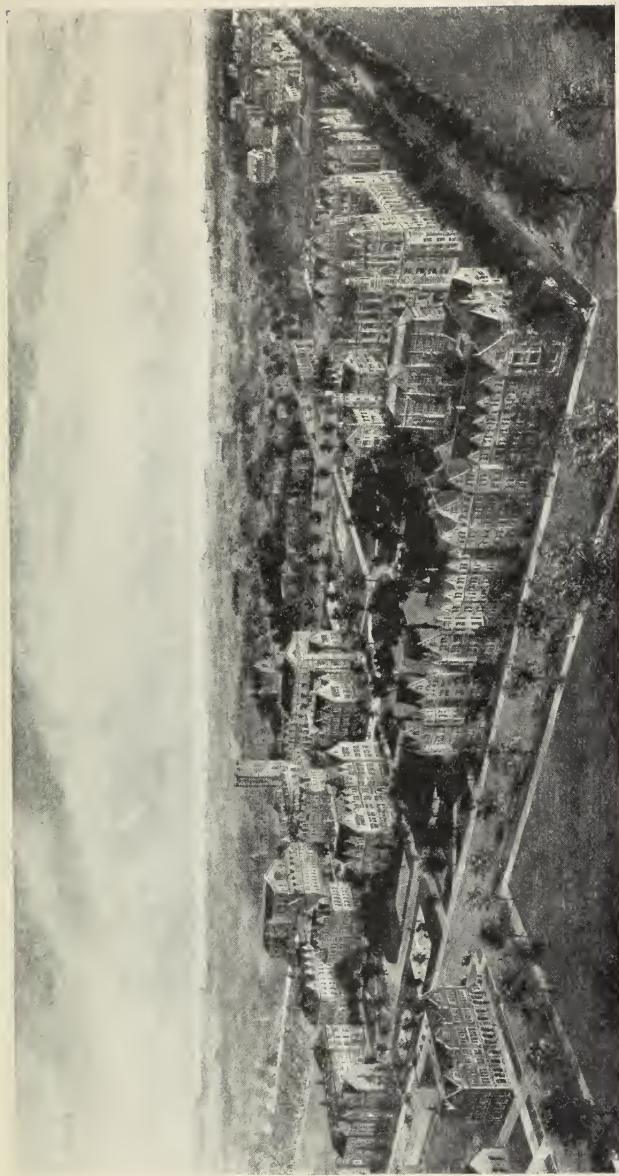
In the late thirties, however, teachers began to be paid from local and state funds according to the number of their pupils and the number of days they attended school. The grade of teachers improved; young men on their way through college to a career in law or politics would teach school to get a start. By the forties thinking men were thoroughly imbued with the necessity of an organized and standardized system, and around the new office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

one began to be evolved. The newspapers began to discuss educational systems, the Prussian, the New England.

Higher education from the earliest years of statehood had been available for those able to pay for it. Peck's Rock Spring Seminary was soon duplicated by many another high school teaching more or less successfully Latin and other academic subjects. Select girl schools began to develop both in Illinois and across the river in Missouri. Above all rose the college.

College education came primarily from the churches' realization of the need of college trained ministers. Colleges were at first definitely denominational; the Illinois legislature, suspicious of religious connection with politics, refused for a time to incorporate theological institutions to grant degrees. In the thirties Shurtleff for the Baptists, the outgrowth of Peck's seminary, McKendree for the Methodists, Knox and Blackburn for the Presbyterians all developed. Before either of these came Illinois College, the fruit of the ambition of a group of Yale men—Theron Baldwin, Edward Beecher, Julian M. Sturtevant, Jonathan B. Turner—to build a greater Yale on the Illinois prairies. Their college they had designed as the center of a great educational system; as such their dream was never realized.

Newspapers one naturally includes among in-



Courtesy of the University of Chicago

**BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO**



tellectual forces; but the newspapers of the twenties were comparatively slight and unimportant; by the end of the decade they hardly exceeded a dozen in number, each with but a few hundreds of circulation. They were small weekly sheets of four pages mostly filled with advertisements and official publications, laws, etc. Their remaining space was taken up with news anecdotes, and scientific scraps clipped from eastern papers, with occasional "communications" by local talent, literary, political, satirical in prose and verse of no very high order. So far as the editors had any policy it was dictated by the factional leaders whose henchmen they were, and revealed itself in feeble attacks on chiefs of the rival factions. Save for James Hall, at one time editor of the *Illinois Gazette*, none of the pioneer editors showed even mediocre literary ability. The influence of their papers was correspondingly slight. The awakened democracy of the thirties and forties gave life to the newspapers. Enlarged in size, with editors if not able at least vigorous, contending with each other on measures of state and questions of principle, they reflect the life and thought of their time as the artificial little papers of the decade of 1820 do not.

Government in the primitive commonwealth was a simple affair. The state government was no more than a legislature meeting biennially,



three or four administrative officials doing their work at first almost without clerks, and a supreme court. Local government was essentially county government—County Commissioners Courts to manage local finances, circuit and probate courts, and justices of the peace to judge locally, and sheriffs to maintain order. Roads in theory were created by action of the General Assembly or of the County Commissioners and maintained by a labor tax; in practice they were usually bottomless seas of mud till the twentieth century. Town governments for many years after 1818 were rudimentary. Police forces were nonexistent. The only laws that could be enforced were laws the local community would enforce itself. When public opinion was slack, bands of robbers on rivers or prairie robbed and terrorized at will till the community was roused to the point of suppressing them by main force.

The social life of the frontier can be described more voluminously than accurately. Recollections of such merry-makings as the corn-husking, the log rolling, the cabin raising, abound; but contemporary descriptions and allusions are infrequent; in the contemporary newspapers they are scarcely mentioned; one wonders whether reminiscence, enforced by the earlier published accounts of frontier life, did not assign them undue importance, or a general one instead of one con-



fined to certain localities and periods of the frontier movement. At all events they are depicted for us as meeting places, evidences of neighborly helpfulness, concluded by jollity, dancing and whisky. The wedding celebration and the dance offered additional opportunity for frontier merry-making. They were marked, one judges, often enough by coarseness, but rarely by anything worse; but the Methodists labored to substitute for them the emotional joys of religion.

Certain other opportunities for meeting were afforded by official duties. The periodical meeting of the circuit courts called into the county seats suitors and jurymen, who learned the news of the outside world from the judge and lawyers riding the circuit, were regaled with speeches by political aspirants, and sat down to dinner in the local tavern all at the same table. The periodical musters and trainings of the militia offered other opportunities for escaping the loneliness of frontier life; but by the forties the militia had become a mere source of military titles.

The conquest of the frontier and the clearing of the land took its tolls in health and life alike. As forest was cleared away or prairie sod broken, vast masses of decaying vegetable matter were exposed to the sun—underbrush, decaying logs, the debris of centuries, from these and from the stagnant pools and swamps came wasting diseases.

Intermittent fever and ague wrecked the health of strong men; and women and children succumbed pitifully to hardships and disease. The generation that began the founding of Illinois was a stalwart one. The men of the second generation were connoisseurs in ill health and medicines. Calomel and whisky was the most common dose; but the newspapers were filled with glowing advertisements of elixirs and patent medicines warranted to cure all known ills from tuberculosis to warts. Ill health in the forties and fifties became fashionable in the United States; the pale and sickly interesting young man, the fragile girl dying of consumption are the romantic figures of the period.

The gloom of sickness and death hung over the lives of the people. They did not know the cheerful light-hearted merriment of the French peasant: Their wit was keen, their humor boisterous, their laugh a guffaw put on over sickness and gloom. The man typical of the wit of the frontier at times masked with a seemingly inexhaustible fund of droll stories a gloom that made him fear to carry any weapon with which he might attempt his life. A literary master has hit off the spirit of the Illinois of the pioneer period in the phrase, "a valley of shadows."

But mingled with the gloom there was a great and inordinate pride. The conquerors of the

wilderness were their own men. The same impulse had moved them to the West, that restless spirit of adventure, the search for better things beyond the horizon; but they had obeyed it as individuals. They needed not to bow their heads to any man for meat. So long as the wilderness stretched before them and their hearts were whole to attempt it, they need be no man's servants. They obeyed no laws save those the community public opinion enforced by the threat of lynch law. They cringed to no public official. They were not like the peasantries of Europe, humble in the mighty presence of the land, that great mother that for twenty generations had moulded them in her bosom. The wilderness to the American pioneer was no mother, but a terrible foe; yet one that encountered with fire, axe, a brain and a stout heart could be transmuted into a little cornfield, a farm and a home. Man knew that if he would he might be greater than his environment and remake it to his use; and the thought ennobled him.

The pride of the frontier becomes most visible when it takes the form of patriotism. Even the most ignorant rejoiced in the heritage of freedom given him in trust for the world's benefit and looked down with contempt on the slaves of despotic government in Europe. He was firmly convinced that his military powers as a freeman

could bid defiance to the world. Angered at the thought of the galling defeats of the War of 1812 that seemed to contradict his heroism, he was prone to ascribe them not to his undisciplined lawlessness in the day of battle, but to his feeble and intriguing leaders at Washington. His eye turned more and more to the figure of one man; a backwoodsman violent, irascible, chivalrous to women beyond the chivalry of romance, true to a friend, stern to a mortal foe, a man who accomplished what he set out to accomplish whether it was bringing a mutinous army to subjection by sheer will power, crushing hostile Indian nations, saving the outlet of the Great Valley from the invader, or teaching a foreign power it could not afford immunity to the violators of American soil. Winged by the news of the great victory at New Orleans, there drifted over the whole west the report of a character inaccurate in details but true in essentials, the very incarnation of the frontier — Andrew Jackson.

## CHAPTER VII

### JACKSONIAN DEMOCRACY

THE first quarter century after the admission of Illinois to the union saw a revolution in the nation's political life. The people of the United States as a political entity came into being and consciousness. Tired of having their president selected for them by conclaves of congressmen in caucus at Washington, they democratized party machinery to nominate and elect him themselves; they devised the democratic organization of nationally organized political parties to support him in carrying out the will of the people in office. In the political history of that quarter century, the outstanding figure is the man who instinctively grasped the direction in which the spirit of the times was turning and who as president made himself the incarnation of the people's will—Andrew Jackson. No Illinois citizen was so vital an element in the Illinois of his day as he.

When first a candidate for president in 1824 Jackson was fifty-seven; at the time he retired from office he was sixty-nine. As a mere boy the savagery of the revolution in the Carolina up-country in which he had taken an active part and had

lost by untimely death his whole family made him a good hater; twenty-five years in Nashville on the frontier of Tennessee had made him more western than the West itself, the truest of friends, the fiercest of foes, duellist, horse racer, cock fighter, Indian hater, hero of hair breadth escapes that related in sober truth sound like the episodes of a dime novel. Nature had made him a leader among leaders, a man who in the War of 1812 led armies of lawless frontiersmen trained to obey only such orders as they liked, ruling them by sheer force of will; a general who won such victories as that of New Orleans by the light of natural military genius; a man whose spirit burned like fire and was not consumed. That figure would have been a significant one wherever placed in the world's history; in the America of 1815 it was the apotheosis of the frontier.

The politics of the United States of the early nineteenth century were not organized to promote the elevation of such a figure to the presidency. It was traditional that the nomination of presidential candidates lay with the leaders of the parties. Since 1796 the candidate of the Republican party for the presidency had been designated by the Republican members of Congress meeting in caucus at Washington. From 1800 to 1824 the nomination of the Republican caucus had been equivalent to election. Men justified the system



by saying that only so could the party be united on a candidate; that otherwise candidates would spring up in the various states and sections of the nation, no man could have a majority of the electoral votes, and the House of Representatives voting by states would have to choose among the highest. In caucus or in the House Congress must choose the president; and its choice fell naturally on the political leaders it knew; men from their youth up expert in politics and statecraft.

For twenty years the United States had acquiesced in this arrangement. But transportation was improving; men were traveling from state to state more than formerly; the age of national conventions was on the horizon. The western states were entering the Union with constitutional provision for manhood suffrage. The older states were casting aside the property qualifications for the ballot that had survived the Revolution. In state after state the system of choosing presidential electors by the state legislature was being abandoned, and their choice by popular vote substituted. The nation, retrieved to a new life by the favorable termination of the War of 1812 felt itself conscious of a new unity and a new strength, of freedom from the chariot wheels of European politics, freedom on the broad continent that stretched to the west to work out its



own destiny. The people reached out for the tools of democracy and began to prove them.

The presidential election of 1824 was the first opportunity for their national use. When Monroe had been elected president in 1816, everyone had taken his reelection in 1820 as an accomplished fact; and almost disregarding the aged president, half a dozen younger men of ambition stretched out their hands toward the prize of 1824. There was John Quincy Adams of Massachusetts, secretary of state, a liberal and a forward looking man; secretary of war John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, still a nationalist; William H. Crawford of Georgia, secretary of the treasury, representative of the old strict constructionist Republicans. These men had their eye on the honōr and were on the ground at Washington to pursue it; and they disregarded such competitors from the outside as De Witt Clinton, maker of New York's Erie Canal, but not on good terms with Martin Van Buren and the state machine, or General Andrew Jackson. The popular appeal of Jackson all of them at first disregarded. But the attempt in Congress and the Cabinet to censure him because, set to stop the raids of the Seminoles on the United States from Spanish Florida, he had done it in his own way without regard to the letter of his orders, the immunity of British subjects, or the *amour propre*

of Spanish officials, had disclosed the fact that very many of his fellow countrymen admired him intensely for these very headstrong acts. He stood forth, after his vindication by Congress as a national candidate for the presidency.

“And for our next President,” wrote Patchett of Pittsburg to his friend James Hall in Illinois in 1823, “General And<sup>w</sup>. Jackson has the full & free voice of the Citizens of Pennsylvania. We sometime since had a meeting in the Courthouse where about 800 of the citizens were present; the names of the several candidates were placed on the nomination list. Calhoun was first balloted for, & had four or five votes; Clay next had five, Adams six; Crawford one; Clinton twelve, or upwards; Jackson was finally brought forth, and in a voice of thunder the Courthouse rung, for the Hero of New Orleans. Jimmy my son, you have been an officer in the last war, your sword was then drawn in defence of your Country—and now let you your pen in time’s of peace be wielded in vindicating the just claims of your old General, as old *Hickory* is the best hoop for national Safety.

“But still I am well aware—there will be many objections set up against General Jackson, both by the Governmental Editors, and the office holders; 1<sup>st</sup> because he hath not been schooled, educated and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, in the Presidential Academy in the City of Washington; 2<sup>d</sup> Because he hath never drank deep that fountain of Political intrigue & corruption, and were he elected President might take away the Loaves

and the fishes from Bladensburgh cowards, and feed the poor starving officers & soldiers who fough[t] our battles during the last war at New Orleans 3<sup>d</sup> Because he is a man of prompt, energetic mind and would as soon put a rascal to death as he would an Indian or an Ambrister, 4<sup>th</sup> objection, altho' he has made the best General in the known world, yet we are afraid to trust him for our President, yet the people may answer—Washington was the greatest General in the world, and made the best President; never the less we can gull the ignorant, and palm a coward on them, for what right have the swinish multitude to interfere in making a President. It shall be done by Legislative Caucus, according to law, 5<sup>th</sup> & last great objection He might do us a great deal of injury as he is so fond of fighting, who knows but what he might declare war against the world and bring down the vengeance of the allied Sovereigns on our heads; and to a moral certainty he would disperse our political nest at Washington City, break up our Presidential Academy, where the great Crawford, Clay, Calhoun & Adams have received that omnipotent nostrum, of political slang. Thus Jimmy my son, you must be prepared to ward off the blows, for all these obstructions and a great many more will be cast in the way of the worthy Chieftain to the Presidential chair; but let us go to work like true Pioneers and clear off the rubbish—we will have a host on our side, we will have all the true Soldiers and all who are true and faithful free-men to rally round the standard of Jackson and Liberty, as none but trembling cowards—office

holders and office hunters will vote against him.  
. . . . But where Jackson was, let a grateful nation answer by their votes at our next Presidential Election, for he hath earned them at the mouth of a British Cannon.”<sup>1</sup>

The nomination of Crawford by the Congressional caucus was a foregone conclusion. The friends of the other candidates at once began an outcry against caucus nominations that found a popular response. In one way or another the candidates were got before the people and a real campaign was on. Illinois had cast in 1820 but 1443 votes for her electors to go through the empty form of voting for Monroe; now she could choose between three or four candidates. After hot contests in her districts she chose two Jackson electors and one Adams elector. The result in the nation was to give no candidate a majority, and to send Jackson with 99 votes, Adams with 84 votes, and Crawford with 41 votes to be voted on by the House of Representatives voting by states.

There Illinois was to play a great part. In the House the sole representative of Illinois, Daniel Pope Cook, could cast a vote as potent as that of the whole delegations of New York, Pennsylvania or Virginia. The local factions in Illinois politics had not divided on the presidency.

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<sup>1</sup> Eddy Manuscripts, University of Illinois.

Cook was left to estimate from the vote for the electors throughout the state which candidate had the plurality in the state's choice. If one elector run under the "Jackson or Clay" label was counted for Jackson, Jackson would have the plurality. Were he counted for Crawford, the probable source of his vote, Adams would have it.<sup>1</sup> Cook was persuaded by his own partiality to Adams to decide in his favor, and cast the vote of Illinois to elect him.

The charge, probably false, broke forth throughout Illinois and the nation as well, that Adams was elected by a corrupt bargain in which Clay bribed by the office of the Secretary of State had swung his strength to elect Adams. It stirred up a deep feeling of moral indignation, that the old soldier, the hero of New Orleans, the first choice of the people for the presidency was pushed aside for a politician and closet statesman. That indignation did not die away, but grew deeper and deeper during Adams' ill-starred term. It was fanned by politicians, especially those of the Crawford following who in Illinois and elsewhere when their chief withdrew from politics, went over to Jackson. It was given validity by the fact that the alliance of West and South on the basis of free trade, no internal improvements, a liberal public land policy, and a white man's In-

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<sup>1</sup> See table, p. 369.

dian policy, naturally cemented itself around a man like Jackson both Western and Southern. But when all is said it was deep anger that the people's will had been disregarded by the people's servants that gave Jackson the vote of Illinois in 1828 two to one and swept the Old Hero into the presidential chair on the first of American land-slides. The elder statesmen might well shake their heads and repeat the axiom that a president chosen by a great popular majority would be a dangerous one. Such a one had been called by the people and he knew his call.

The Jackson enthusiasm in Illinois was destined to destroy the older factional politics. Probably it was discontent with his factional affiliations, rather than with Cook's vote for Adams that caused his defeat for Congress in 1826; but three years later politicians looking back in the light of Jackson's meteoric course in Illinois naturally ascribed it to Cook's defiance of the people's will. Sensing the fact that the day of factional politics was past, the Crawford element in the anti-Edwards following became Jacksonian, and more exuberantly Jacksonian than the Jacksonians of 1824. After 1828 no man might be elected to an office by the general vote of Illinois unless he professed himself a supporter of Jackson. Ninian Edwards hesitated between Jackson and the Adams-Clay group, clinging to both. He



sought the support of Adams men to stay up his disintegrating personal faction, and on that account was condemned by Jackson and his supporters whose ear at Washington former Crawford men like Kane and Kinney had obtained. True, John Reynolds, professing to be a good Jackson man and at the same time quietly bargaining for Adams votes that could be delivered unobtrusively, with Edwards' support slipped into the governorship in 1830, defeating the "whole hog" Jackson candidate, William Kinney. Again in 1834 Reynolds was elected to Congress by Adams votes. But this time he promptly repudiated his Adams following as soon as elected and thenceforth marched under the Jackson banner only.

The rise to prominence of men like Kinney and Reynolds is in itself an indication of the democratic revolution in politics. Both had arisen from the ranks of Illinois frontiersmen. William Kinney was a storekeeper, a Baptist preacher by avocation, so far illiterate that it is almost impossible to disentangle the sense of his letters from the handwriting, spelling and grammar in which they are couched. He was nevertheless an outspoken man of keen mother wit always expressing itself in homely epigrams. John Reynolds, in later years the historian of pioneer Illinois in volumes that are literary curiosities had a smattering of education which he strove to



stretch to the appearance of erudition. Always an office seeker, always searching for the popular side of every issue, fawning on his friends when he needed them and discarding them when they could no longer serve him, he shuffled his way through Illinois politics from 1818 to the days of the Civil War. That such a man could become governor and congressman is proof that the day of aristocratic dignity in Illinois politics had passed.

The years from 1828 until 1834 when the democratic and whig parties fully separate out of the amorphous political mass are years of confusion. To begin with the Jackson movement of 1828 had been one mainly of sentiment and personal attraction. But Jackson's political ideas developed fast after his election. They developed on such questions as internal improvements and tariff in the direction of the limited construction of the powers of the federal government that had characterized the republicans of 1798 and the former Crawford men. When in 1832 the issue of the recharter of the Bank of the United States was forced on Jackson by the Clay-Adams group, he seized on it to rally his western and southern constituencies where hatred of banks and above all of the Bank was rife. He vetoed the renewal of the Bank's charter, and, succeeding in the presidential election of 1832,

withdrew the government's funds from the "monster" and put them in the hands of the state banks. Moreover, his removals from office hardly coincided with his non-partisan and reform attitude of 1817 and 1823. In all these directions his policy alienated in Illinois and elsewhere many men who had been his ardent followers in 1824 and 1828.

As a result there was from 1830 to 1834 a steady secession of Jackson men to the ranks of the Clay-Adams opposition; and many men who continued to call themselves Jackson men and to run for office as Jackson men opposed again and again the Jackson measures in Congress. For instance, Joseph Duncan, sole Congressman from Illinois from 1826 to 1833 did this until 1834. Then he ran for governor of the state against a field of William Kinney and Robert K. McLaughlin, out and out Jackson men, and James Adams, whig. Duncan did not repudiate the Jackson name until after the canvass, and was easily elected. In that same year six candidates opposed each other in the three congressional districts of the state, all six declaring themselves Jackson men, but some of them endorsing a United States Bank.

In order to strip malcontent Jacksonians of the party name and force them to support the measures of the party or to leave it, the democratic

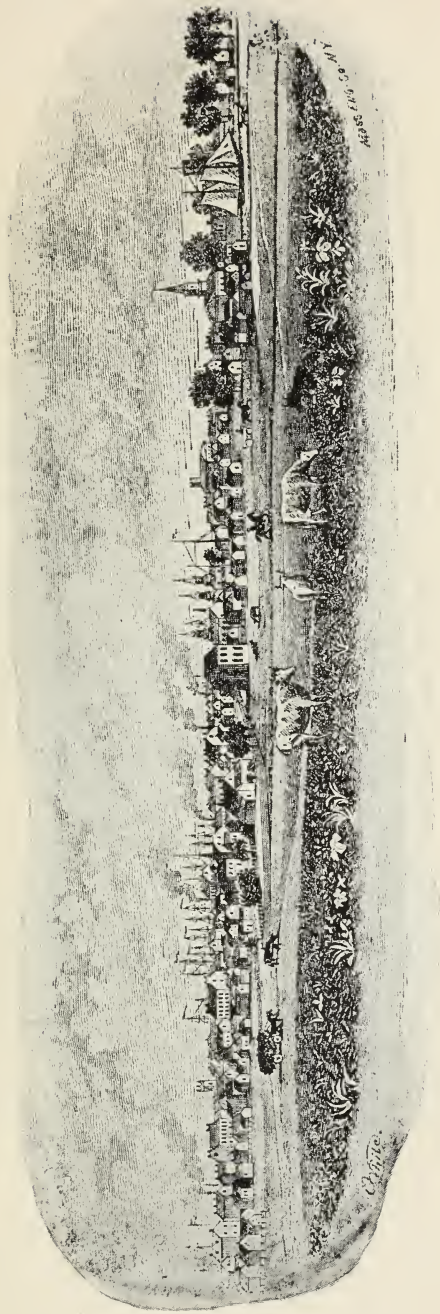
party was formed in Illinois between 1834-36, its party chiefs evolving the ideas of party regularity and the convention system. Briefly stated, these are that no man may run for office as a Jacksonian or a democrat—a term one may at length use—unless he supports the measures of Jackson as set forth in party platforms. In order to secure the election of loyal democrats, all democrats must give up the former right of appearing as candidates for office whenever they wish; they must submit their claims to conventions held in the district in which they are to run, and must agree to support loyally the candidate chosen by the convention as the party standard bearer. Otherwise the party vote may be divided, and the opposition triumph.

Over the party machinery thus devised, a fierce controversy waged within and without the party. Resolutions denouncing the convention system were introduced in the Illinois legislature in 1835 and bitterly contested. On one side it was alleged that the convention system was democratic, that it enabled the poor but upright young man of ability to run for office with united party support, and deprived the man of prestige, wealth and social position of the advantage those gifts would give him in the race were he free to enter whenever he saw fit. This undoubtedly was one reason why men of this latter sort gravitated to the

whig party. On the other hand conventions were denounced as subject to fraud and manipulation, dens in which wily politicians could defeat the will of the voters; no doubt too often was this the case.

The convention system, however, adopted in Illinois some years after the Jackson party in both Ohio and Indiana had adopted it, was to have a rare record of efficiency in the state. In 1838 and 1842 it enabled the democrats to substitute one candidate for another in the midst of the race for the governorship. In 1838 their first choice, James W. Stephenson, was proved a defaulter; Thomas Carlin was substituted for him and elected over Cyrus Edwards, the whig candidate, brother of Ninian Edwards. In 1842 Adam W. Snyder died during the canvass and Thomas Ford was put in his place and beat handily Governor Duncan.

The system had its real test in the democratic party in the troublous years 1837-1842. Those years began with the great panic of 1837 caused by inflation of credit through the lavish issue of bank notes and deposits by state banks enjoying government deposits. To repair the evil Van Buren, now President of the United States, proposed the sub-treasury system: the divorce of the government from all dealings with banks, the collection of government dues in specie, their deposit



CHICAGO IN 1843  
[Reproduced by permission of Chicago Historical Society]





in strong rooms or subtreasuries under care of government officials, and the making of all disbursements in specie likewise.

It was only after a desperate struggle that the democratic party in Illinois was brought in line for this policy. The senators, R. M. Young and John M. Robinson, both comparatively obscure men, were in favor of it. All three congressmen, Zadoc Casey, from the Southeast, Adam W. Snyder from the Southwest, and William L. May from the North were elected as democrats; all three opposed the subtreasury. The democratic papers of the state, generally in favor of the measure, declared war on the congressmen. Zadoc Casey was in a district where the democrats were not yet in favor of conventions; his personal popularity secured his reelection in 1838 and 1841. Then in 1843 in a redistricted constituency he was badly beaten. But Adam W. Snyder was compelled to decline a reelection; and in the northern district in 1838 Stephen A. Douglas was substituted for May as the democratic candidate by a convention; and was beaten only by a hair's breadth by John T. Stuart, whig. Douglas in especial prided himself on his share in introducing the convention in Illinois politics; by 1843 it was in full use by the democrats throughout the state in both state and local elections.

Douglas' rise in Illinois politics had been me-



teoric. Born in Vermont in 1813, he had come to Illinois penniless at the age of twenty, and had settled in Jacksonville. He attached himself to the democratic party and rose from office to office—public prosecutor in 1835, state representative in 1836, register of the United States land office at Springfield in 1837, secretary of state in 1840, judge of the state supreme court in the same year, congressman in 1843, United States senator from 1847 to his death in 1861. As great a demagogue as John Reynolds himself, ability, magnetism, frank lack of scruple in political methods, and equally frank devotion to the ideals of democracy and the Union made him the worshiped leader of voters who had speedily fathomed Reynold's shallow cajoleries.

The whigs were slower in adopting close organization. This was inevitable, as at first they were in considerable degree but a congeries of elements thrown off from the original Jacksonian group as the democratic party was crystallizing out of it. A personal grudge, dislike of Jackson's Bank policy, of his removals from office, of his opposition to the tariff or internal improvements—any one or all of these might have determined the secession of a man or a group from the Jackson party. In 1832 a certain group had tried to run electors for Jackson and R. M. Johnson instead of Jackson and Van Buren. Some of the

group ended as undoubted democrats, some as whigs; and besides there were of course the Anti-Masonic and Clay tickets supported by open opponents of Jackson. In 1836 also the whig policy was divide and conquer. In Illinois an electoral ticket was run pledged to vote for either the liberal William Henry Harrison or the conservative Hugh White for president, whichever had the better chance; and apparently the elements supporting the two candidates were not in perfect harmony.

The campaign of 1840 is illustrative of the same tendency. The whigs nationally nominated the liberal William Henry Harrison for President and an extreme statesrights man, John Tyler, for Vice President, without a platform. By the use of frontier symbols and appeals to mob psychology they sought to reawaken for their candidate the genuine enthusiasm for the Jackson of 1828. So monster mass meetings were held, attended by thousands of people, marching by delegations from all parts of the state to Springfield, bringing floats of log cabins with coon skins nailed to the door, latch strings out, and barrels of hard cider at the door, all to prove that Harrison was a man of the frontier, simple, hospitable, a brave general, charitable to old soldiers. A sort of feast of tabernacles, it was as though commemorative of the hardships of the pioneer days al-

ready passing away; and when in the midst of cities of the East, bankers, merchants, and mechanics met around log cabins to pledge each other in tin mugs of hard cider they sought to impress on men that the golden days of the past with their imagined simplicity and democracy would return with the election of Harrison.

Harrison swept the nation. He lost Illinois because the democratic organization was too strong; also because the whigs had been placed in the position of seeming to deny to unnaturalized aliens the right to vote in state elections. Moreover, in supporting a whig, Alexander P. Field, in his attempt to hold the office of secretary of state against Governor Carlin's attempt to remove him, they seemed to advocate the undemocratic position of unlimited tenure of office. The rest of the nation, for all the fruits of their victory the whigs were destined to reap, might as well have followed the example of Illinois. Harrison died a month after his inauguration, and John Tyler, bound by no platform, vetoed the Bank Bills and other whig measures. Full of wrath the whigs deserted Tyler, save a few like Daniel Webster, who served him two years more as secretary of state. In Illinois as elsewhere Tyler's strength was but a "corporal's guard" recruited from both whigs and democrats, plus those men willing for the sake of offices to be all things to all men.

Naturally the whigs did not repeat their mistake. In 1844 they ran undoubted whig candidates for President and Vice President on a party platform. But many of the Illinois whigs still shrank from adopting in state politics the democratic system of party organization. In 1842 no convention to nominate a whig candidate for governor was held; the party newspapers persuaded all the whigs who put themselves forward except Joseph Duncan to withdraw. In 1846 it was seriously proposed that the central committee nominate the candidates for state offices, as in effect had been done in 1838; and the convention of 1846 was hardly more than one in name. In a famous manifesto published in 1843 Lincoln with two other whigs laid to the lack of conventions the defeat of the party in the elections of 1842; in answer Governor Duncan preached the older whig doctrine of the iniquity of conventions.

The control of the democratic party in the state after 1843 seemed to rest in the six democratic congressmen elected in that year. As a result of the redistricting of 1843 the whigs could count on but one seat in Congress, that in the seventh or central district contended for by John J. Hardin, E. D. Baker, and Abraham Lincoln, among the most prominent of the younger whigs of the state. The six democratic congressmen, led by John Wentworth of the Chicago district,

Stephen A. Douglas, and John A. McClernand, controlled the federal patronage, governed the party in the state, elected Douglas senator, and silenced the *Illinois State Register* at Springfield, the state Democratic organ, when it dared raise its voice in protest.

The opinions and characteristics of the two parties deserve a word in closing. The whigs in national politics were supporters of the Bank of the United States and after 1837 opposers of the sub-treasury; they were favorers of protective tariff and internal improvements at national expense. Their public land policy was Clay's distribution bill, and they had to prove as best they might that the doles of money Illinois would receive under it would counter-balance the indefinite continuance of the price of one dollar and twenty-five cents per acre. More generally they were a party of the middle classes, sentimental, reading sentimental papers, appealing to sentiment in elections as in 1840. Their party name of whig recalled the days of the English revolution of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and indicated their stand for the independence of the legislative as against the executive.

The whig politician of Illinois typical of the party was Orville H. Browning. He had come to Quincy in 1831, a young lawyer educated at Augusta College, Kentucky. He became equally

famous in the tax title litigation so important in the Military Tract and in defenses of criminals that moved jury and audience to tears. As a politician he was a skilled debater, a suave and florid orator, but a man with a personal fastidiousness, elegance and self conceit that contrasted with the democratic exterior affected by his rivals, Douglas and Richardson. In his later years he was to be senator, and secretary of the interior in Johnson's cabinet; now he doubtless considered himself in ability and in grace the superior of his whig associates, Hardin, Baker, and Lincoln.

The principles of the democratic party began with the motto which Blair set at the head of the party organ, the *Washington Globe*, "The world is too much governed." Their policy was strict construction of the constitution with respect to internal improvements and the chartering of corporations like the United States Bank. At the same time the Illinois that had applauded Jackson's vigorous onset on nullification by South Carolina, saw nothing in strict construction incongruous with the most outspoken nationalism. That the government of the United States was a government of limited powers did not mean that the United States was not a nation. The western democrats sought to enforce on their party a public land policy that would give the actual settler his choice of a farm at a nominal charge or



none at all. Some of them had a hankering after national internal improvements in spite of the declared party policy on it. The more radical group in the democratic party, the so-called Locofoco element in New York City and the great masses of the party in Illinois represented by John Wentworth's *Chicago Democrat* and the *Illinois State Register*, were in favor of human rights as against property rights. East and west as time went on an element increasingly apparent opposed all banks, state or federal, and preached an agrarian democracy.

In the democratic party thus developed in the Illinois of the middle forties the democratic elements of the frontier had found full expression. The one ominous thing was the unnatural alliance in the same party of the western farmer, believing in the dignity of labor and the rights of man, with the great mass of southern slave holders. From the middle forties the democracy of northern Illinois increasingly chafed against the predominance of the slavery element in the councils of the party. The wave of frontier enthusiasm for Andrew Jackson had developed into a party of democratic name and in part of democratic ideals; but as the increasing importance of slavery in the lower South divided that section's interests from those of the Northwest a fissure on the surface of the party became more and more apparent.



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE EXPANSION OF THE FRONTIER COMMON-WEALTH 1830-1846

THE twenties had seen the population of Illinois overleap the inferior lands between the Wabash and the Mississippi in the southern part of the state and attain the rich Sangamon River country. It had crossed the Illinois River into the present counties of Calhoun and Pike and began to press northward in the military tract. In the thirties new tides of population pouring in from the South or by way of Chicago, the Great Lakes and the Erie Canal from New York and New England were to flood over into all the country north and west of the Illinois and Kankakee Rivers. By individual settlers, by colonies, the flood seeped in. Farms and towns developed over night. Speculation in real estate ran riot, and men began to dream of great transportation systems to create a great economic empire in the valley; their dreams for the moment were unattainable, but they only faintly foreshadowed the development a half century was to make in northern and northwestern Illinois.

The early thirties saw the disappearance of the

Indians from the prairies. The relics of the Illinois, the Kickapoo, the Shawnee had all been removed by treaty beyond the Mississippi. The Winnebago of northern Illinois and Wisconsin, responsible for the little flurry of 1827 characterized in Illinois history as the Winnebago War followed in 1832, after the Black Hawk War. The Pottawattomie of Lake Michigan made their last cession in the state at Chicago in 1833. Two years later they came for the last payments on this country under the treaty; as they held their last dance on their old assembly ground at the Chicago River they were in the midst of the streets of the new village of Chicago. Fort Dearborn, garrisoned two years longer, was swallowed up by 1858 in a bustling city. Within a young man's memory the modern metropolis had replaced the frontier trading post.

The Sac and Foxes who still dwelt to the east of the Mississippi were not easily got rid of. In 1804 they had made their first cession good or bad at St. Louis; the Treaty of 1816 after the British desertion of the Indians had compelled them to ratify the earlier treaty. A group from the two tribes under the malcontent war chief, Black Hawk, adhered still to the British, made pilgrimages year by year to Malden for the presents and advice of their British father and clung to their corn fields and the graves of their ancestors at

Rock Island, which by treaty they were privileged to occupy until it should be sold by the United States. The frontiersmen could not wait in deference to Indian sentiment. They began to occupy and improve the site of Black Hawk's village. The Indians resented it, and, forced across the Mississippi, Black Hawk began a last, pitifully hopeless war against the white men.

For a time in 1832 northwestern Illinois was kept in terror by Indian raids and murders; the incidents of frontier Kentucky, the gathering of settlers in blockhouses, attacks on small parties of militia were repeated from time to time. Black Hawk was soon chased into the unknown wilderness of southern Wisconsin. The regular infantry of the United States army was at a disadvantage in a war with mobile mounted savages, and the mounted militia and volunteers mustered from Illinois and from Wisconsin Territory were a better reliance. One volunteer soldier of skill Illinois produced, General James D. Henry. A blacksmith by calling, Henry delighted in the reading of military books. Nature had given him the ability to lead undisciplined men and an instinct for tactics and strategy that led him right where men with better systematic training went wrong. His claims to the honors of the Black Hawk War were disputed by the Dodges of Wisconsin and by regular officers; but any careful

student must concede to Henry much of the credit for the battles of the Wisconsin and the Bad Axe, which reduced Black Hawk and his band to abject submission. Black Hawk was held a prisoner, his Indians removed across the Mississippi. A century and a half after Marquette had first met the Indian in the Illinois country the white man had finally expelled him from it.

The Black Hawk War has an especial interest to Illinois history for the reason that many a promising young politician with a career before him answered the call of duty and marched with the militia to put down Black Hawk. Most of the Illinois statesmen of later days who were in the state at the time entered in their records the campaign of 1832. Abraham Lincoln served as a captain of militia in it, and accepted a land bounty for his service, which he later immortalized in a richly humorous comparison of its bloodlessness with the military record of General Lewis Cass.

With the passing of the Indian there was nothing to impede the advance of the white man. Everywhere farms were carved out of the wilderness before the government had opened it for sale. As tract after tract was put up for sale in the new land offices opened at Galena, Chicago, Quincy, and Danville, settlers who already had fenced and broken tracts of land and put up cab-



BLACK HAWK  
(1768 - 1838)  
From an Old Portrait



ins or had bought the improvements of earlier squatters thronged to the sales to buy the tracts on which they had already established their homes. At times in the thirties temporary pre-emption acts protected them. When they did not the settlers protected themselves. In land districts before lands were put on sale the settlers formed settlers' committees which first adjusted disputes between actual settlers as to overlapping claims and then attended sales in force to overawe any speculator who dared to bid on a settler's improvement.

The methods of the war with the soil were changing. Men had conquered their dread of the prairies; but they took care usually to enter sections that included a bit of wood land for cabin, fence rails, and fire wood. If they did not they had to borrow those necessary articles from the lands of nonresidents or if the settler had a New England conscience, from the land still belonging to the United States. Good springs and healthful home sites were other things to look for. The men who came to this district in the thirties had money to spend; and definite rates for service established themselves, two dollars and fifty cents an acre for breaking prairie, two dollars a hundred for cutting rails, hauling them and building a rail fence. Often the claim and improvements of a squatter without his one



dollar and twenty-five cents per acre to pay in at the land office were for sale and made that much easier the establishment of a new home. Squatters and day laborers could and did by industry earn the money to enter quarter sections of their own. The day of promise seemed fully dawned for every man able and willing to work.

Everywhere through the district was to be found the track of the speculator. For years eastern speculators had been buying up choice tracts in the so-called military tract west of the Illinois River; for many a veteran of the War of 1812 parted with his bounty land in Illinois for a song. Now they were busy in the new reaches opened up for sale in northwestern Illinois. A favorite trick was to buy up the quarter sections of woodland along the rivers and resell at a handsome profit to the heedless man who located his tract entirely on the adjoining prairies. But the town sites offered even better picking. As county seats in the new counties springing up, as commercial centers, old forts, trading posts and fords were developing into towns, Warsaw, Oquawka, Savanna, Rock Island on the Mississippi, Peoria, Rockford, in the interior and above all Chicago.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The following advertisement may serve as a specimen of the speculative towns of the day.

PUBLIC SALE OF LOTS IN THE TOWN OF HURON

On Monday 21st of August next, will be sold on the premises to the highest bidder, 100 Town Lots in Gay's addition to the

Chicago in the middle thirties was the happy hunting ground of the speculator. Into the Chicago River crowded schooners and steamers expeditiously bringing emigrants and their house-

town of Huron, Sangamon county, Illinois. Huron is situated on the south bank of Sangamon River, at the point before known as Miller's Ferry, about 30 miles from Beardstown, 30 miles from Jacksonville, 30 miles from Freemont and Pekin, 30 miles from Springfield, the seat of government of the State—also at a point where the canal from Beardstown must intersect the Sangamon River, (by an act of the Legislature) which has already been surveyed. It is likewise about the geographical center of that part of the Territory of Sangamon county, which by general consent, it is conceded, must in a short time become a new county—is surrounded by fertile and healthy country, now containing a large and industrious population, and which is constantly and rapidly increasing. It must command a large portion of the trade of Pecan bottom, a tract unrivaled in fertility and beauty by any in the State, as well as a large extent of rich and fertile country adjacent. And in the event of the construction of the canal (which from the nature of the river, precluding almost the possibility of its ever becoming navigable) which the interests of the country and of the stockholders require, Huron will possess the advantages of an immense water power, that cannot fail to build it up at once into a flourishing and populous town. There is one saw and grist mill now in operation about 4 miles from Huron, and two more building within six miles. The water is of the first quality. There are two state roads running through Huron at right angles, and the principal part of the travel to the upper part of the Military Tract is thro this place. The town lies on the second table, and principally about 30 feet above high water mark. Should the State take a fancy to make the Sangamon River navigable, (which might be done by digging a channel 150 or 200 miles) then Huron possesses the advantage of being one of the most prominent points of the river.

We say that Huron possessing all these advantages must become an important place, and is worthy the attention of persons who wish to make good investments, or who seek favorable locations for business.

Terms—Six and twelve months credit.

Huron, July 7, 1837

*Sangamo Journal*, Aug. 5, 1837.

G. W. GAY, *Agent*.

297 ts.

hold goods, merchants and their stores from the head of Lake Erie where De Witt Clinton's Erie canal opened up the way from New York and New England. Some of the newcomers swarmed out into the rich lands of northern Illinois; but many stayed in Chicago. The city grew rapidly year by year in population. In 1837 it was incorporated. Town lots sold for one hundred dollars a front foot; speculators made fortunes in the city's real estate.

Speculation was not merely local to Illinois. In those years it ran throughout the Union and throughout the West in particular. The deposit of federal funds in state banks had given the banks great assets on which they were eager to reap profits. They would readily lend to the speculator the precious bank notes that would buy at the land office the sections and quarter sections of rich western land. The attention of the speculators fluctuated from state to state; Indiana this year, Mississippi that, Illinois another led the sales of lands in terms of millions of acres where a decade before barely hundreds of thousands were sold. Till Jackson checked the mania by prescribing that only gold and silver be received for public lands speculating was easy and sure wealth.

Throughout the states of the northwest men's imaginations ran riot. They were fired by the

matchless beauty of the untouched prairies with their lavish succession of flowers from the spring violet and grass flower, the pink, the crimson phlox, the physostegia, the purple liatris, to the blue and gold of the fall aster and the golden rod. Their cupidity was quickened by the promise of the rich farms that lay beneath; by brisk and thriving villages grown over night, by commercial metropolises whose buildings in sober reality grew as through a mirage. The promise of wealth nature stretched out to them on every side with lavish hands. Only adequate means of transportation and capital seemed needed to enjoy it at the fullest; and with optimism run wild men in the middle thirties set about securing both these things.

The general assembly caught the contagion and once more began to think in terms of millions. It had about 1830 painfully wound up the affairs of the State Bank of Illinois; it had seen the Bank of Edwardsville fail and the Bank of Illinois at Shawneetown while solvent suspend business. It had despised not the day of small things and had debated with praiseworthy economy of the people's money appropriations of hundreds or thousands of dollars, and with republican virtue had looked closely to its own small per diem. But the boom times of the thirties awoke it anew. It began once more the chartering of banks. The

Bank of Illinois in 1835 was rechartered for a capital of a million. The new State Bank of Illinois was created in the same year to have branches and a capital of \$1,500,000.

These friendly institutions would doubtless supply to a growing and progressive country the money it needed but how was the state to obtain the transportation required to pour into the world's markets the produce of the Illinois prairies? True there was the grant of Federal land obtained for the Illinois and Michigan Canal in 1827 by Daniel Pope Cook—his last service to the state. Alternate tracts to a depth of five sections along the route were much. Illinois had discussed various projects, had debated the advisability of canal or railroad, and finally in spite of engineering difficulties decided on a canal. In 1836 the state finally concluded to undertake the work of funds raised on credit, trusting to the sale of canal lands and the tolls of the canal to pay the debt. That same session of the legislature saw the passage of a flood of bills for private corporations to construct railroads, canals, turn-pike roads with powers stated in all degrees of looseness. In view of Marshall's decision in the Dartmouth College case that a state may not change corporate powers it has granted, one shudders at the thought of what an ungovernable transportation system Illinois would have endured

had these bills been anything but a pleasant mirage.

The excitement was satirized most ably by William Kinney, in a speech that may serve as a specimen of his style:

Mr. Cheerman—The gentleman *what* has just taken his seat says, he is decidedly in favor of railroads, and that upon the joint stock principle, the state subscribing one third and individuals the residue; a railroad should be constructed from the city of New Jerusalem, about to be built on the Rocky Mountains, through Peoria to the City of New York—For he says, there are actually people now residing at Peoria! And report says there are even some (*besides Indians*) beyond there.—He knows every inch of ground in the whole state of Illinois—and has surveyed the same from the center to the circumference—and Peoria is exactly three miles, twenty three chains, eleven and eleven sixteenths links from the geographical center; and in all respects the most suitable and practicable location for a seat of government in the universe; and is in fact the only place under the sun where all the turnpikes, railroads, highways, canals and water courses, both natural and artificial, must eventually terminate.

The gentleman in flights of fancy has disdained to confine himself to this little dirty planet, earth—in his vast and fertile imagination he has constructed a double track railroad to the moon, and traveled thither on a locomotive at the rate



of 75,000 miles per hour — thence he has thrown a sunset and landed straddle of the north pole — then vaulted into the regions of eternal space, and there with a dead rest and unerring aim, has shot at eternity.

Some men are born *poets*, and all women are born *singers*, but as to *that air critter* what has just taken his seat, any body can see Natur has made him an Orator!<sup>1</sup>

But now southern Illinois had caught the internal improvement fever. The oldest settled part of the state, she had seen the rich lands of the north fill up while her own counties remained unpeopled. A great transportation system might redress the balance. Accordingly in the session of 1836-7 the legislature set enthusiastically to work out a great system of internal improvements to be constructed on the credit of the state. The Wabash, Illinois, Kaskaskia and Rock Rivers were to be improved. There was to be an Illinois Central railroad from the terminus of the Illinois and Michigan Canal to the mouth of the Ohio River at Cairo, two east and west lines, the Southern Cross and the Northern Cross railroads, the former from Alton to Mt. Carmel, the latter via Quincy and Springfield to the Indiana state line, and divers other enterprises. All this was supported on the most enthusiastic calculations of

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<sup>1</sup>*Belleville Advocate*, Dec. 9, 1841.



profits from the work and the distribution to the states of the surplus federal revenue. The Council of Revision consisting of Governor Duncan and the justices of the Supreme Court vetoed the bill, but it passed over the veto.

The Internal Improvement System had been adopted because at the same session the question had come up of a relocation of the state capital. The capital had been located for twenty years at Vandalia merely as a speculation in town lots by the state. Now as the twenty years neared its end Alton, Jacksonville, Peoria, and Springfield were all aspiring to the dignity. The Springfield delegation in the legislative session of 1837, the famous Long Nine—headed by Abraham Lincoln—traded their votes on the internal improvement system for the location of the capital at Springfield.

As Abraham Lincoln was one of the leaders in the internal improvement movement, and in his earlier life typified the ambition for material progress that characterized it, it is fitting here to recall to the reader the main facts of his earlier career. He was born in central Kentucky in 1809. His father was of the squatter type and drifted with the advancing frontier, first to southern Indiana, and then, in 1830, to eastern Illinois, to Decatur, and to Coles County. Abraham Lincoln now of age struck out for himself, settling at New

Salem, then included in Sangamon County. His physical strength and his wit made him a leader and he went into politics, running a close race for the General Assembly in 1832 and being elected in 1834, 1836, 1838, and 1840. He soon was counted among the younger leaders of the whig party in the state. First an unsuccessful storekeeper in New Salem, he took up the study of law by himself and in 1836 was admitted to the bar. He removed to Springfield in 1837, marrying Mary Todd, daughter of an aristocratic Kentucky family, five years later. With the exception of a term in Congress, 1847 to 1849, he devoted himself to the practice of law at Springfield and on the Eastern Illinois circuit till the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854. To his contemporaries he as yet seemed little more than a good jury lawyer who sought the law of his cases by intuition rather than study, a clever and honest politician, and a companion whose wit made him the life of his company.

When the system went into effect, in accordance with the law construction was begun simultaneously at many different points. The panic of 1837 cut off the bonus of federal money. The State Bank to which the state had subscribed paper capital expecting to receive huge specie profits was deep in difficulties. The legislature of 1839 at the behest of the South laid a heavy

tax compared to what the state had hitherto known; twenty cents on the one hundred dollars was an argument to use in approaching English bankers for a loan. Opposition to the system had already been gathering; and this tax turned the scale. Demands for a classification or a repeal of the system began to spread.

Meanwhile the Fund Commissioners of the state floated what bonds they could in New York, and then turned to the firm of John Wright in London. Commissioners for the canal bonds and the internal improvement bonds were soon competing in the market. Blocks of bonds from the hands of bankrupts began to come in the market and depress it. Governor Carlin considered for a time the contract with Wright illegal, held it up long enough to cause the failure of Wright's house and then ratified it. Work on the system stopped in 1840. By 1841 the state could no longer pay the interest on its bonds, its work stopped and the whole system came crashing down. The banks had suspended specie payments; the State Bank had speculated wildly, its notes circulated at an increasing discount and ruin was everywhere. A member of the general assembly stated that in his district constables and magistrates were the only business men.

The roseate hues of speculation and optimism no longer colored life. Northern Illinois dis-

trustful of the imperial destiny of the state began to look longingly toward debt free Wisconsin Territory and many men proposed that the Northwest ordinance be obeyed and the northern boundary of the state be the line through the foot of Lake Michigan. Trade had degenerated into barter. It is of these days that old residents of Chicago used to delight in telling how they had refused an offer of the site of Marshall Field's retail store for an old set of harness. Certainly one hundred dollar a foot values were no longer in evidence.

The solution of the state's difficulty was achieved in 1842 in the election of Governor Thomas Ford. His opponent in the election, former Governor Joseph Duncan, had rather looked to the tariff of a whig national administration in 1845 and money doles to the state from the federal government to extricate it. Ford's scheme compelled the state to rely on itself. The winding up of the state bank, and an agreement by which the state's creditors should advance funds for the completion of the canal on a pledge of its lands and tolls was the solution finally adopted and adhered to by both sides. Population and business now flowed to Illinois and the debt of fifteen millions no longer seemed a serious matter. Illinois had extricated herself by her own efforts from the effects of her folly. She



*Thomas Ford*

[Plate owned by Illinois State Historical Library]  
(?—1850)





had been too optimistic of the future in 1837, but her destiny was unfolding rapidly. The railroads came fifteen years later than she looked for them; but the material progress they brought outran the wildest dreams of 1837.

The state, however, owed her immediate rescue to a man of the age that was passing. Poverty had beset Thomas Ford throughout his life. It had condemned him as a young man to a role in politics below his abilities, and in his middle years to the meager pay of a circuit judge. In the vain hope it might be a legacy for his children, he left at his death a *History of Illinois* that is a remarkable work. Approaching the period of the state's history through which he had lived as an example of the futility of American politics he dissected with a merciless scalpel both politicians and political methods. John Reynolds in particular writhed in agony at the acid recounting of stories revealing his littleness at which the bar at its circuit dinners had doubtless roared many a time. The future careers of Douglas, Trumbull and Lincoln were of course beyond Ford's knowledge; and he drew all his characters on the same scale. To him the period was one of little measures and little men. The pessimism with which one of the keenest commentators on American political life regarded it is more in the fashion of the present age than of his own.



In the face of the great change that was to come over Illinois in the decade of the fifties, we may consider two incidents typical of the frontier period of the state on the eve of its passage. Only in the frontier stage of development could the dual tragedy of the Mormon settlement and the Mormon war have been staged. Mormonism, according to the Mormons, began in 1827, when the Angel of the Lord surrendered to Joseph Smith miraculous golden plates that had been buried for some fifteen centuries on the hill at Palmyra, New York; marvelous plates that told long histories of emigrations to America in days before Christ and in the early Christian era, of the preaching of the gospel, and the founding of churches here, of wars and the wiping out by barbarians of all trace of the divine message. These plates translated by Smith through miraculous interposition into the dull and not too grammatical book of Mormon laid the foundation of the Latter Day Saints, a religious group moulded into a community economically and politically servile to Joseph Smith and his family and a few other leaders.

The Latter Day Saints moved from place to place and always persecution followed, once in Ohio, twice in Missouri. The last persecution by the Gentiles in Missouri was the bitterest and about 1840 the Saints sought refuge at Nauvoo

in Hancock county on the Mississippi. Here the faithful began to gather together, some converts by Mormon elders in the East, more from England and Europe. A city of perhaps 20,000, the largest in the state grew up in a few years. Mormons scattered into the outlying districts, but even so Nauvoo had hard work in finding enterprises to keep her impecunious thousands in food.

From the beginning Smith had sought to trade off the thousands of votes he controlled for political privileges. He obtained a charter for Nauvoo that gave it an independent militia organization and local legislative power concurrent with that of the General Assembly. In 1840 his followers voted for Harrison, in 1842 for Ford and the democrats; but in 1844 Smith aspired himself to be a presidential candidate.

Meanwhile ugly rumors about Nauvoo and the Mormons began to circulate. Scabrous recruits to the colony like John C. Bennett, when expelled from it, began to tell scabrous stories of debauchery and plural marriage that went on in it. Reports that it was a refuge of horse thieves antagonized the local farmers. In 1844 the city government under the Smiths forcibly suppressed the Nauvoo *Expositor*, a newspaper that began to attack their management and morality. A few weeks later the Smiths going to Carthage, the county seat, in obedience to legal process were

murdered by a mob in the Carthage jail.

Thereafter the Gentiles of the surrounding country took up arms again and again to force the withdrawal of the Mormons from the state. Nauvoo was twice attacked by military forces from surrounding counties; once the governor mustered the power of the state to protect it. But Brigham Young, stronger and abler than ever the Smiths were, had seized control of Mormonism, expelled all hostile elements and prepared to lead the colony to the far West where his power would be absolute. In 1846 the last of the Mormons had left the state on their way to Salt Lake. The well-built houses, many of them brick, that had sheltered a population of thousands, the church buildings, and above all the great temple completed before the Mormons left, found no successive tenants to use them and have long since fallen into ruin; a sleepy little village of a few hundred, nestles in what was a religious colony.

Much may justly be said in condemnation of the violence that drove the Mormons out of the state at the point of the rifle; much more of the murder of the Smiths. But it must not be forgotten that the Mormon cancer was growing with frightful rapidity, and that it had fastened itself in a body politic so rudimentary that the tissues could not of themselves expel the intruder. The

knife of mob violence was the only thing that could do it. Smith had striven to set his community outside the law of the state; by political bargaining he had nearly accomplished it. The state had no police force adequate to deal with the menace of autocratic government and defiance of law and morals at Nauvoo. The frontiersmen took the law in their own hands when the simple government they had erected in the state for their simple needs proved inadequate. In the frontier stage that was passing in the forties action was necessary that in the more advanced state of a decade later would have been inexcusable.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE COMING OF THE RAILROADS

THE years in which Illinois was called to the foremost place in the nation's councils in deciding the great questions of slavery expansion, war and reconstruction were also years in which she was in the throes of a mighty rebirth. Between 1850 and 1870 she was transformed from a simple frontier rural community to an industrial state, with large cities growing into mighty ones as cities had never grown before in the world's history. Suddenly she was compelled to meet the problems of a social, economic and political life made many times more complex. Many factors worked in the accomplishment of the change but the greatest of them was the railroads.

The railroad era represents one of a series of mighty strides forward that the modern world was taking. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries if one had been asked what the civilized world in material achievement had added to the heritage of Greece and Rome, he could only have mentioned the mariner's compass, the application of gunpowder to war, and the application of the

printing press to the rapid spread of the written word among men. By the end of the eighteenth century he would have had to add that the application of steam to manufacturing had made possible the increased machine production of the industrial age. After 1830 he would have seen the remaking of the farm and the multiplication of the crop that could be reaped by a single man by the harvester and other agricultural machinery; he would have seen the revolutionizing of transportation, the binding of city to city, state to state, nation to nation, by the ocean steamship, the telegraph, and the railroad in a degree that transcended the imagination of the most gifted tale tellers of the past.

The railroads of the thirties had failed because the state had embarked on an over-ambitious scheme dictated by political alliances and roseate hopes rather than sound economic considerations, and for the funds to attempt its construction had pledged her credit to credulous financiers ignorant of local conditions. How capital had accumulated in the eastern United States; how, why and in what combinations it began to look to Illinois railroads for investments are questions that cannot be answered until the economic history of the United States is adequately written. But by the late forties capitalists were beginning to bid for charters that would carry railroads across the



state to St. Louis or at least to Chicago at the terminus of the Illinois and Michigan canal. That canal, opened in 1848, was already pouring the grain of the Illinois River country and even of the Mississippi away from St. Louis to Chicago, en route for eastern ports by the Great Lakes. The old cry of federal aid for internal improvements reechoed, and though such things had no part in the program of the democratic party, western-minded democrats like Douglas and Wentworth set about to get them. Douglas believed that funds to make navigable the rivers of the state could be obtained by the imposition of state tonnage duties. For the construction of a railroad in the state to link Lake Michigan and the Ohio in 1850 he secured a federal land grant.

For years before Senator Sidney Breese had been working for federal aid to the Illinois Central Railroad projected in 1836-7; Douglas took up the scheme, satisfied states rights democrats by making it a donation to the state for the construction of the road; and bore back in triumph a federal land grant along the lines of the projected road—a Y connecting Galena and Chicago with Cairo—that was to net the Illinois Central Railroad Company two million five hundred thousand acres. A set of eastern capitalists promptly undertook the work; and eastern Illinois, then almost a desert, blossomed as the rose



with towns and farms.

Meanwhile the state legislature was besieged with requests for charters for lines to cross the state and connect the Mississippi with eastern-trunk lines. Here local interests contended obscurely with each other. Each locality of course opposed the railroad schemes designed to help its rivals; but Alton especially in the name of "state policy" sought to prevent its rival, St. Louis, from being the terminus of any line crossing the state. In spite of the fact that Governor French and some of the most prominent democratic politicians were in favor of a St. Louis terminus, the advocates of "state policy" in a called session of 1849, passed a general railroad law with a provision that the General Assembly must approve routes and termini. In 1851 the Assembly approved the routing of the Ohio and Mississippi railroad from Vincennes to Illinoistown opposite St. Louis. The Terre Haute and Alton project, however, aided by the Ohio and Mississippi road, till 1854 blocked the chartering of the Atlantic and Mississippi—a connection between Terre Haute and Illinoistown. Bribery of the legislature was freely charged on both sides. The Atlantic and Mississippi was not undertaken till 1865; but Lieutenant Governor Koerner by inserting a joker in a local railroad bill, secured a connection between Alton and Illinoistown that

made Alton only a way station on a route from Terre Haute to St. Louis.

Meanwhile other roads had appeared with magical haste. The Galena and Chicago Union, later part of the Northwestern system, incorporated in 1847, had fourteen miles in operation in 1849, and reached Freeport in 1853. It soon added an air line west from Chicago to Fulton. In the same years a network of roads in northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin developed, ultimately to be combined in the Northwestern system. Between 1851 and 1854 the Chicago and Rock Island was constructed; and by 1854 the Chicago and Alton. Within a year or two separate roads from Quincy to Galesburg, from Galesburg to Mendota, Galesburg to Burlington, and from Aurora to Chicago, were united into the nucleus of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy.

Connections with the East had already developed. In 1850 the Michigan Southern and the Michigan Central, built by rival capitalist groups, were seeking to block each other out of Indiana and Illinois. Ultimately they entered the state over spurs, built under state charters for the Michigan Central by the Illinois Central, and for the Michigan Southern by the Rock Island. Chicago interests feared a junction outside Chicago from Joliet to La Porte, and felt that a union of

eastern and western lines even five miles out of the city would ruin its prosperity.

This was of course but the outline of the Illinois railroad net of the present. Year by year new roads and connections developed, a dozen projects dying ingloriously for every one that came to fruition. More than one relic of the mania of 1837 was galvanized into a hectic life.

"I was creditably informed," wrote J. C. Allen to Governor French, December 9, 1851, "A few days since, that General Pickering, the indefatigable proprietor of the Mt. Carmel and Alton Rail Road, in his zeal for the completion of his favorite work, has actually hired an Irishman and set him to work on it, he (the Genl) acting as Superintendent."<sup>1</sup>

Men learned to use the railroads as soon as they came. By 1853 the *State Register* noted the discontinuance of the last of the lines of stages for which Springfield had been noted. The bar, riding the circuits through the state, speedily learned to abandon the buggy, the wagon or the stage, and to pick its way even by roundabout routes from one railroad line to the next. Complaints of crowded cars occur before 1854. The next year the Illinois Central introduced sleeping cars. In 1857 the first through Chicago-St. Louis sleeper was put in operation. The coal burning

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<sup>1</sup> French Manuscripts, University of Illinois.

locomotive came in to take the place of the wood burning. Accidents began to happen. The superintendent of the Chicago & Alton issued an order in 1853 that an hour before evening trains were due section masters should pass over their sections on hand cars to drive all cows off the track. Unfenced right of way had their dangers and the companies set to fencing them as speedily as they could.

In the years between 1849 and 1856 the population of the state was changing rapidly. The restless frontier elements of pioneer Illinois were flowing out to the newer West. Migration to California in 1849-50 caught the popular imagination.

"Our town," said the *Ottawa Free Trader*, March 23, 1850, "has for the past week been every evening so crowded with California teams and emigrants, that the hotels have not been able to accommodate all. We can scarcely look out of the windows but we see California teams, some drawn by oxen, some by horses, some by ponies, some by mules—every species of conveyance seems to have been brought into requisition and every known contrivance to get through. On Fox River we are credibly informed, the migration will average one out of every six able bodied men . . . while in our own County, although not as large as this, the proportion is yet fearfully large. You can scarce pass a wagon, wrote

an Illinois emigrant, but tis the common inquiry of 'Where do you hail from?' the certain response is 'from Illinois;' 'what county?' and you may have an answer from every county of the state."<sup>1</sup>

Similar banded migration to Kansas and Nebraska from 1853 on, and to Pike's Peak in 1859 attracted attention. The steady drift of the restless to other parts of the newer West, revealed by the census of 1860, passed without comment.

Population poured in far more rapidly than it poured out. Eastern Illinois between 1850 and 1856 settled as if by enchantment. The Illinois Central Railroad held its lands as high as fifteen dollars an acre. Speculators like Governor French hastened to make locations along it in central and southern Illinois on government lands that still sold as low as twelve and one-half cents. Men, and even neighborhoods in "Egypt" that had improved farms on government land without troubling to enter it, trusting to the rifle to protect them against intruders, were threatened with loss of their lives' earnings of \$4,000 or \$5,000.<sup>2</sup> In 1849, almost fifteen million government acres, or two-fifths the area of the state remained unsold. In 1857 there were but 294,149 acres left. In

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<sup>1</sup> *State Register*, May 31, 1849.

<sup>2</sup> Both the United States and the Illinois Central granted liberal terms to such squatters.

four years the railroad changed Jonesboro from a village of fifty log huts to a town of two thousand population. A man who in traveling over the Illinois Central from Mattoon to Odin in 1857 had only the conductor and brakeman in the car with him, in 1864 passed through thriving villages every six miles, where formerly there were but open prairies or bare station houses. Between 1850 and 1860 the population of the forty-nine counties through which the Illinois Central ran was said to have increased from 335,598 to 814,891. Similar results appeared in the military tract and to a less degree in most other parts of the state.

Southern and eastern Illinois at last were settled. The population that came in came from New England; it came also from Germany in the shape of political idealists, seeking a land of liberty after the disaster of 1848; and from Europe generally. There were colonies of Frenchmen as at Nauvoo, of French Canadians in the Kankakee country, of Swedes as at Bishop Hill. Norwegians pressed into the state. The foreign born population tended toward towns; by 1860 Chicago had more foreign born than native born population.

At the coming of the railroads the McCormick harvester and the many other makes of reaper, had already foreshadowed the revolutionizing of



Illinois agriculture. In the Civil War young men by hundreds of thousands could leave the farms of Illinois for the battlefield, secure that the reaper could gather crops that would feed the United States and Europe as well. No longer was a man's planting limited by the amount he could reap by the scythe in a harvest season. In the middle fifties, the tedder, the steam plow, were taking their place beside the reaper. Skilled farmers who had been in Illinois since it was a state had been eager to teach their fellows all the scientific agriculture known in their day. Now the instruction was enforced at first hand by the great cattle feeding ranches, the great farms, the great fruit orchards that stood as incentives to the ambitious pioneer farmer. Agricultural societies and agricultural papers spread the information how the excellency of these things might be copied. The shiftless farmer and the dilapidated farmhouse were migrating or amending. The Illinois farm, the basis of the state's prosperity, was already being revolutionized before 1848 or 1850. The railroad accentuated the progress.

One of the most striking characteristics of the period was the development of Chicago. By 1859 men mentioned with pride that Cyrus H. McCormick's reaper works gave support to 250 families; but manufacturing was the least of her achievements. The completion of the Illinois and



Michigan Canal had resulted in the shipping by Chicago and the Great Lakes of great amounts of grain, that formerly found its way by the Illinois to St. Louis and the east. Holding that her lake route to the east was her greatest commercial asset she feared lest railroad cut-offs to the east should deflect trade from her by rail, unconscious of the bounty the railroads were to fling in her lap. The New Orleans outlet of St. Louis for produce was inferior to that of Chicago on the Atlantic seaboard. The Alton and the Illinois Central contributed their share to bringing produce into Chicago and distributing merchandise from her. The roads that in the fifties reached out from her to the Mississippi and to the Greater Northwest beyond diverted great masses of freight that formerly had followed the Mississippi to St. Louis. For instance, receipts of lead there between 1851 and 1857 declined from 503,751 to 200,402 pigs; and on the ground of obstruction to river traffic St. Louis vainly made war legal and illegal against the Rock Island bridge across the Mississippi, the symbol of the ruin of her commercial empire in the north.

Chicago business became hectic as today, as a description of the Chicago grain dealers of 1859 may show:

They get up at sunrise, bolt their steak and rolls, and rush down town to the "first board,"



*C. H. McCormick*  
(1809 - 1859)

[From painting in the McCormick Agricultural Library, Chicago]



which meets at a well known corner between eight and eleven o'clock. There they buy and sell—till it is time to attend the "second board," at the Board of Trade rooms. There they investigate the bulletin boards, note the receipts and the shipments.—Half-past eleven o'clock comes, and all eyes are turned towards the telegraph office across the way. The New York dispatches are expected; and nothing can be done till they arrive.

The "third board" has met—on the corner before mentioned (some call it Gambler's Corner), and the same operations described on 'Change are repeated—only with more recklessness. . . . And thus it goes till six o'clock. . . .

. . . . What! go home at six o'clock, and not return to the city again! The steamer might come in with a decline, and thus thousands of dollars would be lost—or not won—which is all the same. . . . No; they must attend the "fourth board" at the Tremont House—or rather on the sidewalk opposite the Tremont. . . . It meets at 7 o'clock P. M.<sup>1</sup>

Chicago in population increased from 29,963 in 1850 to 80,000 in 1855, 109,000 in 1860, and 298,977 in 1870. The other towns of the state increased also. The little trading centers of the forties numbering two, three, four or, as at Chicago, eight or ten thousand began to grow in earnest. In 1850 Springfield, Alton, Peoria,

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<sup>1</sup> *Chicago Press and Tribune*, July 4, 1859.

Cairo, Quincy, Belleville, Beardstown and Ottawa were all thriving towns. By 1860 the largest of them, Peoria and Quincy, exceeded twenty thousand.

Naturally such municipalities had their problems. Before 1850 the Illinois municipal law, applicable to little towns of a few hundreds, was highly rudimentary. Now with the gathering of population together regulation became essential. Boards sinking in abysses of mud could not take the place of sidewalks. Hogs wallowing in muddy streets and cows chewing their cuds in repose across footways sorted ill with the ambitions of young metropolises; and one after another in the fifties the Illinois cities from Chicago down wrestled with the problem as to whether hogs and cows should be barred from the public streets. Once that was done there arose the problem of the garbage formerly piled high in the gutters for hogs to remove, of drains in the open street, of polluted water supplies; and while the towns toiled over their A. B. C.'s of sanitation, epidemics of cholera swept them as in 1848, 1850 and 1851.

On such matters no city could be the first to cast a stone at a rival.

"Our city Hogs," said the *Springfield Journal*, September 7, 1853, "are a very industrious and

refined race as evidenced by their labors and amusements. They are now in the enjoyment of the city, find plenty of "grub" every where, and feel no anxiety for the coming morrow. . . . The peach stones found about the streets and cracked by the swinish herd, are used as a dessert. They amuse themselves by digging holes in the gutters, some of them at the corners of the streets—some several feet deep—the one at the corner near the State House is probably three feet deep—into these they collect all the moisture in the neighborhood and stir up a most beautiful batter. It is about the consistency of cream or perhaps mush. Now, every thing ready, his swine-ship takes a walk about the city. He notices, especially, all newly painted fences and houses within his reach." . . . .

Thirteen years later even a worse story could be told of Chicago.

Men had to learn that living so closely together they must do many things jointly that before they had done each for himself. In 1850 Chicago was preparing to install gas lighting, a sewage system, and a water system. In 1853 Quincy and Peoria put in gas plants; in 1855 Springfield and Quincy had water works. The presence of many little children in cities too dense to allow of family cows created the necessity of dairies; and till men learned to regulate these, the innocents were massacred by milk from cows fed with distillery mash. Busses appeared in Chicago in 1850, street cars in



1859; and till the coming of the automobile set individuals once more at liberty from the mass, men in cities used public utilities and traveled and lived together in ever increasing degree.

Some of the problems of the age were not so easily settled. The descendant of the New England Puritan, the zealous Methodist, had modes of life quite different from those of the German or Irish emigrant; and with his greater political experience and skill set about enforcing his own theories of sobriety and decency upon them. No question existed that the doggery, grocery or saloon, where whiskey was dispensed freely, was a bad thing; at its worst along the line of the canal where a whiskey was sold the "canal Irish" consisting of a concentrated extract diluted with water; and the Puritan set about reforming it altogether. In Chicago the elements accustomed to the use of beer and wines on the Sabbath succeeded in defeating everything but a high license system; but in one down state town after another prohibition was tried in the middle fifties and then abandoned. Between 1851 and 1853 a law, practically a dead letter, prescribed that liquors should not be retailed in less quantities than one quart; on its repeal the temperance advocates began to press for a "Maine law" prohibition; but the slavery question pushed temperance in the background for two generations; and Illinois



saloons continued to reflect the lawlessness of pioneer days till our own times have seen the desperate device of barring the use of alcoholic beverages. The New Englander fought with the German and Irishman over Sunday observance also; but on this question for the time being the Puritan sabbath came off second best.

Some of the problems lay deeper yet in the future. The very massing of population in the cities was a sign that the day of opportunity for the landless man to become landed was passing. As early as 1852 the grant to the Illinois Central and the seizing on the public lands by speculators had produced an anti-land monopoly agitation. In the middle thirties a man of strength, sobriety and industry in the Northwest could earn in a year or two the one hundred dollars that was the price of a half quarter section of government land. Now, on wages of seventy-five cents to one dollar a day in cities where rents were high there was no such chance. Men worked ten and twelve hour days and found when wheat was one dollar and forty cents a bushel they could not feed or clothe their families; the hard winters of 1854 and 1857 brought suffering. The democracy of Wentworth and Douglas had sought to relieve these men by a homestead act, but that act passed in 1862 was to be the work of the republicans. Meanwhile, the high prices of the Civil War

finally brought trades unionism to Chicago, strikes and the modern phase of the struggle of labor and capital.

Other problems were on their way. The simple rural democracy of the forties had regarded banks as the work of the evil one. Beaten in the election for the constitutional convention of 1847, while they had excluded a banking clause from their constitution they had admitted a proviso that a system of state banking with notes secured by bonds might be submitted to popular vote. The constant demand of the new industrial order for banking facilities was too strong. Men like George Smith of the Wisconsin Fire and Marine Insurance Company did a prosperous business in note issue at Chicago in defiance of law. In 1851 the state legislature over the governor's veto submitted to the people of the state a banking law allowing institutions to incorporate and to issue notes secured by Federal or state bonds. The passage of the measure by a vote of 37,650 to 31,413 was one more sign that the old order was changing.

The system for some years worked with fair success. Some banks fell by the wayside in panics of 1854 and 1857; but the great majority stood till the secession of the Southern states depreciated the value of their bonds. Then bank after bank gave up the struggle. In May, 1861, notes

of fifteen banks were depreciated to fifty cents, fifty-three went from sixty to ninety cents on the dollar, and only six at par. The issue of the greenbacks, the National Banking Act, and its tax on the notes of state banks, left the surviving banks to carry on a strict banking business without issue until the system of state supervised banking was adopted in 1887.

The railroads themselves brought the worst problem of all on the unsuspecting community that welcomed them so innocently. From the beginning the eastern capitalists who in most cases had subscribed the majority of the capital assumed control. The representatives of the minority holdings in Illinois, and of subscriptions by towns and counties were powerless. Even in the fifties rates were manipulated to favor certain localities. After 1861 the Mississippi competition was shut off by the Civil War, and the railroads proceeded to send their rates for passengers and freight up to unheard-of figures. This, with discrimination in favor of long hauls over short, ownership and monopoly by railroads of grain elevators, added to the difficulty in ways but too familiar. Men proposed additional canals to offer competition; canals from the Illinois to Rock Island, a ship canal along the Illinois and Michigan Canal. Failing these things they sought to establish competing lines. In 1868 the *Paxton*

*Record* protested that at railroad rates wheat could be teamed to Chicago at a profit. The regulation of the railroad by state or nation was for the future. This was its day of power to be arrogantly used.

The solution of the problems of the fifties was made more difficult by the change that had come over Illinois politics; the day of small things had passed. Eastern capitalists had much to seek at the hands of the state government; the calling of special sessions of the assembly, railroad and corporation charters; favors in the funding or acknowledgment of the state's indebtedness; and certain groups were ready to check each other's schemes by means none too scrupulous. Stories of bribery and counter bribery of state executives and state legislatures circulated freely; with how much truth it is impossible to say.

Beyond question, however, a new type of men were coming to the front in politics; men who as financial associates or legal advisers had private relations with interests with which they might have to have public dealings. Governor French, 1846-1852, though opposed to banks, was an inveterate speculator in lands enhanced in value by railroads, and in his official position had to favor by his acts one or the other of rival railroad interests; Governor Bissell had been a railroad attorney and was accused of formerly driving sharp

bargains for his clients with the state.

Most significant is the career of Governor Joel A. Matteson, elected governor in 1852 as a supporter of the banking system. He had made a speculative fortune from small beginnings, was interested financially and as an official in both the Illinois Central and Alton Railroads, was accused of using money and the influence of those roads and of colonizing voters to aid Douglas in 1858 and 1860; was caught in 1859 defrauding the state in the refunding of its indebtedness and compelled ultimately to reimburse the state. Though his case was an extreme one the taint of corruption hangs on much of the politics of the period. Even where no actual corruption existed, politics and business alike seem often leavened by sharp practice that steered close to fraud and dishonesty. The nature of men was no more debased than formerly, but temptations were greater.

The problems that arose in the era of the railroads had almost swamped the available governmental machinery. At the outset of the period Illinois had adopted the new constitution of 1848. That of 1818 had placed practically all the legislative power, and very much of the appointive power, in the hands of the legislature; had left the supreme judiciary of 1824 practically to hold for life or good behavior; and had assigned to the executive but a shadow of authority.

The constitution of 1848 was the work of an age suspicious of government. It provided that practically all elections, even judicial ones, were to be made by the people. It left the governor a veto that could be overridden by a majority vote, but by a great enumeration of prohibitions sought to bind the hands of the state legislature. It provided for popular referendum on certain subjects of policy and by limiting salaries of officials and the pay and length of sessions of the General Assemblies sought to enforce a Jeffersonian simplicity.

The framers of the constitution had their eyes on the age that was passing and not on that which was entering. Barely was their work adopted before its defects began to appear. Officials were insufficiently paid; General Assemblies in sessions limited to a few weeks had to deal with floods of private incorporation acts full of jokers and outrageous provisions, passed literally in batches, so that they could be neither checked nor amended.

All through the fifties a new constitution was confidently awaited; when a convention met in 1862 it was unfortunately in the height of the excitement of the Civil War. The convention was overwhelmingly democratic. The constitution it drew up prohibited private acts of incorporation, provided that all future charters be subject to amendment and repeal, prohibited new banks, and



the circulation of bank notes after 1866. In homestead exemption and mechanics lien clauses it sought to appeal to the poorer classes. Popular excitement was raised against it, because of the partisan character of apportionment in it and it was rejected by a popular majority of 16,051.

The last years of the old constitution were by far the worst. The legislative session of 1867, marked by an appropriation of \$3,000,000 for a new state capitol, the establishment of a penitentiary in southern Illinois, and the location of the state university at Urbana, was an orgy of log rolling with charges of corruption freely passed on all sides. The financial interests that could gain or lose in the new Illinois by franchises in the gift of the legislature were too powerful to be bridled.

Private bill legislation swelled the statute books of the sixties to huge proportions. Corporations of any and every sort could and did buy themselves charters. Governors like Palmer in vain interposed the veto to check the orgy.

Threats of railroad regulation became merely a means of blackmail.

Early in the session the old schemers, anxious to replenish a depleted exchequer, introduced in the senate a bill for an act to regulate the passenger and freight tariff on railroads, and today it passed that august body. Contrary to their



expectations, the railroads did not imitate Zaccheus and come down, but they could not recede from their position. It is a matter of grave doubt whether the legislature can place restrictions upon those companies already incorporated; in fact, I believe it is generally conceded that the only application the proposed law can have is to the companies hereafter incorporated. To Southern Illinois this is a most unjust and iniquitous measure.<sup>1</sup>

Decorum passed along with decency.

"Dignity in our Senate," said the *Aurora Beacon*, March 21, 1867, "is thrown to the dogs. A spirit of innocent playfulness pervades that institution, that is like Artemus Ward's Kangaroo, 'highly amoosin.' In the first place the Speaker is a very interesting animal. He handles himself with a great deal of grace and agility. The way he uses the gavel would do credit to a stone cutter; and the way he *don't* preserve order would astonish a country school master. . . . The twenty-five senators are a very nice body of men. They have a free and easy way with them that is decidedly refreshing. In order to dispatch business as rapidly as possible, and save the State expense, they usually omit the useless ceremony of addressing the Speaker, and ordinarily from six to ten of them have the floor, and all speak at once. . . . Those who are not engaged in making speeches, usually employ their massive talents in manufacturing paper balls and

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<sup>1</sup> *Cairo Evening Bulletin*, January 16, 1869.

throwing them at each other, or in occasionally varying the proceedings by hurling books at the speaker's or some Senator's head." . . .

Under the conditions of the new era the Constitution of 1848 had broken down; once the issues of the Civil War were settled a new Constitution was inevitable.

## CHAPTER X

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SLAVERY ISSUE, 1837-  
1856

SO TERRIBLY was the generation that followed the Civil War, impressed by the mighty storm that shook the foundations of the Union that in writing the history of the years before 1860 they made the slavery question a cloud menacing ever since the Compromise of 1820. In doing so they unwittingly distorted the facts. The slavery question in the thirties was a cloud no larger than a man's hand and went almost unnoticed in the Illinois politics of the period; not till the forties did it become a danger to be reckoned with; not until the repeal of the Missouri Compromise in 1854 had led to a split in the democratic party and its defeat in the state it had controlled for a quarter of a century, did men dream of the terror of the years, 1858-1865.

The defeat by popular vote in 1824 of the proposal to call a constitutional convention that might introduce slavery into Illinois was followed by years of profound quiet on the slavery issue. Kidnapping of free negroes resident in the state attracted little attention; the free negro, most men

agreed, was a nuisance. The supreme court of the state slowly defined the rights or lack of rights of the negro and the servant indentured under the old territorial laws of 1807 and 1812. The verdict in general was that whatever validity the indenture system had was given it by the constitution of 1818. Time did its work. By the fifties the last traces of slavery among the French inhabitants and the indentures of the territorial period had disappeared.

The slavery question first excited passing attention with the rise of Garrisonian Abolitionism and the question of excluding abolition newspapers from the mails and the gagging in Congress of abolition petitions. The Illinois congressmen on these points were generally orthodox. The state legislature in 1837 delivered itself of its opinion on the subject in forcible terms in a set of resolutions. Only seven votes were cast against it; two of the voters, Dan Stone and Abraham Lincoln, spread on the journals of the House a moderate protest. From the beginning Lincoln was a hater of slavery.

Abolitionism, however, had already reached Illinois. Elijah P. Lovejoy, a young New England Presbyterian minister, in 1833, had begun editing a denominational paper in St. Louis. Driven to the Illinois side of the river by mob violence, he set up at Alton the *Alton Observer*

assailing in Miltonic invective with the biting scorn of the Puritan every vice and sin. Inevitably he turned to the subject of slavery. In the thirties northern men, however much they might disapprove it in the abstract, believed the criticism of the peculiar institution of the south fraught with danger to the union and therefore to be discountenanced. Lovejoy could be discountenanced neither by rebuke nor by threats of violence. Two of his presses were destroyed by mobs. The fear of personal violence for him drove his wife to the verge of insanity. His death he knew would leave his family destitute. Yet driven by a force stronger than himself he went on. He procured still a third press, and while defending it against a mob he fell, November 7, 1837, rifle in hand.

The news of the tragedy rang through the union, binding the name of Lovejoy forever to the name of Alton. New Englanders believed in later years the town was accursed for Lovejoy's blood. In Illinois, however, though men were indignant at the violence by which Lovejoy had met his end, the vast majority disapproved of the course that had brought him to it. His slayers went unpunished; the men associated with him in the defense of his press were indicted, "for unlawfully defending a certain warehouse." And the Baptist organizer, John Mason Peck, himself a New Englander, who had hated the uncompromis-

ing young Presbyterian, believed that by refraining from public denunciation of the murder he had brought about a blessed outpouring of divine spirit in the form of a gracious revival.

The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church. Lovejoy had taken the new school side in the Presbyterian schism, from distaste of the proslavery alliance of the old school. The eve of his death had seen at Alton the organization of a state antislavery society. As the standard fell from Lovejoy's hand it was caught up by the old antislavery editor, Benjamin Lundy, who published at Hennepin the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*. Lundy, that he might write as he thought, cultivated a little farm. A wheat harvest in 1839 taxed his strength overmuch and a fever silenced his journal forever. But a year later the Lowell *Genius of Liberty* replaced it; within three years, its name changed to the *Western Citizen*, it was removed to Chicago, flinging defiantly to the wind on its headline the haughty challenge by which the Puritan in age after age has made weak things to confound the mighty "The Supremacy of God and the Equality of Man."

The antislavery movement grew fast in northern Illinois. Antislavery societies spread, Congregational churches wrote the doctrine in their confessions of faith, and the Liberty party was organized in Illinois in 1840. Garrisonian aboli-

tion had demanded the centering of attention on the crime of slavery, and passive resistance to it; Garrison himself 'decried all participation in politics. The liberty group on the other hand prepared to fight the evil with the citizen's weapon, the ballot. Many men in it looked on the contest with slavery as but one phase of a contest for human rights and liberty for all men. Intellectually such men were not far removed from democrats like John Wentworth, who, interested in human rights as against property rights, believed they could only be maintained by the alliance with the democracy of the South. Meanwhile Wentworth recognized that the ideas of the Liberty party were working through New Englanders both democrats and whigs, and forebore to antagonize it. By 1846 the Liberty party held the balance of power in thirteen counties of northern Illinois.

The slavery issue entered national politics in the question of territorial expansion. Demagogues like John Reynolds sensed the popular enthusiasm in Illinois at the prospect of expansion and of war with the old enemy.

"Mr. President," said he in a speech built around the twin ideas of the Annexation of Cuba and war with Great Britain, "as Hannibal swore eternal hostility to the Romans, so I swear eternal hostility to monarchies, especially to them that



dont let us alone. I have nothing to say against the English people but to their cursed government I have sworn war. It is generally the case, Mr. President, that when a man is cavorting against another; that the cavorter is wrong and the cavor-tee is right, but when I am cavorting against the English government I am not cavorting for nothing. I have heard my father tell of their oppression and tyranny. I know of the sufferings of the Irish under their persecution—I have read of their butcheries in China and other parts of Asia. I have read of their paying savages in the revolution for the scalps of our men, women and children” . . . .<sup>1</sup> and so *ad nauseam!*

The democratic platform of 1844 demanding the reannexation of Texas and the reoccupation of Oregon voiced Illinois sentiment. True, there was a gasp of disappointment traceable in the state newspapers when Polk instead of Van Buren was the democratic nominee; but they loyally set themselves to elect him. Then came the disappointments in his policy. He vetoed river and harbor improvement bills of vital importance to northern Illinois; he proposed a tax on tea and coffee, the luxuries of the white laborer. Worst of all, he compromised with Great Britain for a half of Oregon, while he drew the sword on Mexico in behalf of the extreme boundary claims of Texas. To avoid war with the ancient enemy he

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<sup>1</sup> *Illinois State Register*, Jan. 17, 1846.

sacrificed territory destined to be the abode of freedom, while he shed American blood to spread more slave plantations over the free soil of Mexico. Northern democrats like Wentworth believed that southern slavery dictated Polk's foreign policy, and reared in the party harness.

In the Mexican War, Illinois had her full share. Of her regiments the First and Second under Colonels Hardin and Bissell fought at Buena Vista, where Hardin—"our best whig man" Lincoln called him, fell at the head of his regiment. The Third and Fourth regiments served under Scott with James Shields as their brigadier at Vera Cruz and Cerro Gordo. Two more regiments served in Texas and on the Santa Fe expedition. Illinois soldiers were magnificently brave and magnificently undisciplined. General Wool said to Hardin, "I will take away your commission, sir." "By God, you can't do it, sir," said Hardin.<sup>1</sup>

Popular enthusiasm for the war compelled the whigs in Illinois to disguise their dislike of the grounds on which it was made. Lincoln had introduced in Congress resolutions expressing a doubt as to whether the first American blood had not been shed on a spot beyond the American border; and the nickname of "Spot" Lincoln was fastened on him by the democrats to imply that he had refused to vote supplies for the army.

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<sup>1</sup> Pease, *Frontier State*, p. 402.

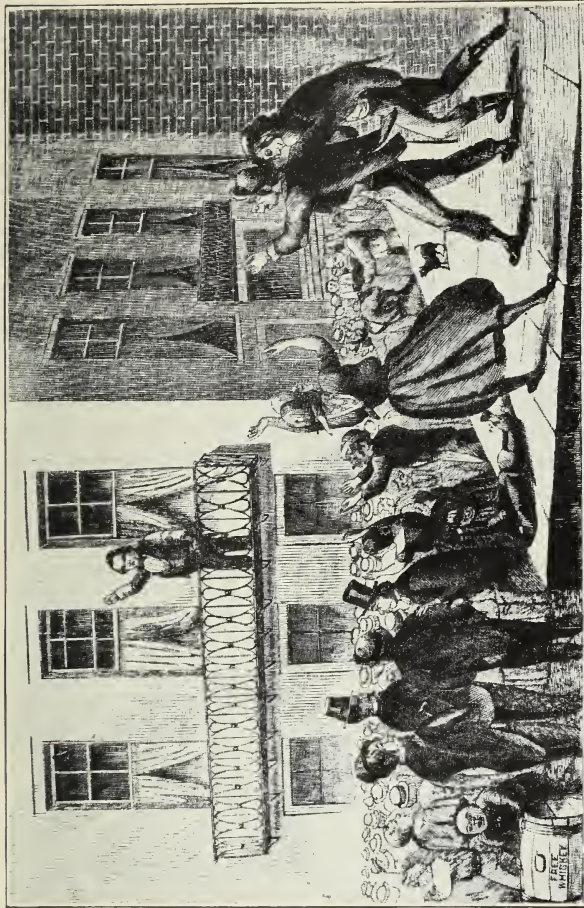
Another Illinois whig in words later famous, cynically remarked that he had ruined himself politically by opposing the War of 1812; and that thereafter he was for "war, pestilence and famine."

The immediate answer on the part of the north to Polk's war in Mexico was the Wilmot Proviso—that in any territory acquired from Mexico slavery should be prohibited. Wentworth endorsed it; so did the northern democrats of Illinois generally. A River and Harbor Convention held in Chicago in 1847 in the interests of forcing adequate federal appropriations to river and harbor improvement, marked how close Wentworth was to rebellion against his party. Lincoln was made authority for the statement that the administration had issued orders to defeat him even though a whig should be elected. Wentworth stopped at the brink of party revolt. He professed to believe that the nomination of Lewis Cass for the Presidency, even on a platform without the Proviso or river and harbor improvement would set all straight. But 1848 was the year of the Free Soil revolt in the democratic party and the Free Soil independent candidacy of Martin Van Buren. Cass went down in defeat before General Zachary Taylor, hero of the Mexican War, slaveholder, and whig nominee for the Presidency. Illinois remained democratic, but the

party in the Chicago district especially was splintered by the Free Soil defection.

The Presidential election of 1848 settled nothing of the slavery difficulty. The question of the disposition of the spoils of Mexico: whether California should be received in the Union as a free state; whether the territories to be organized in the southwest should be free or slave threatened to disrupt the Union. Southerners like Calhoun were calculating the value of the union to the South, talking secession, and affirming that slavery could constitutionally be excluded from not an inch of the territory of the United States. Northern men were insisting that there be no further compromises with slavery; that the peculiar institution might be tolerated where it was already but not elsewhere.

To settle this question Henry Clay proposed the compromise of 1850; admission of California as a free state, organization of Utah and New Mexico without mention of slavery, and a fugitive slave law. When the compromise first offered by Clay in the form of a single measure had failed, Stephen A. Douglas succeeded in getting the provisions adopted in the Senate one by one. The Illinois delegation in the House, Richardson and McClernand in particular, assisted in the passage of the compromise. The Illinois senators, Douglas and Shields, were compelled by instruction of



## RECEPTION OF JUDGE DOUGLAS AT CHICAGO, OCTOBER 4th, 1860.

y<sup>n</sup> Democracy attempt to outshine y<sup>s</sup> Republican Demonstration in honor of Mr. Seward, and y<sup>s</sup> Little Giant expounds y<sup>s</sup> Great Purification of making y<sup>s</sup> democratic voters y<sup>s</sup> sovereigns of y<sup>s</sup> nature.

# CARICATURE OF STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS ADDRESSING AN AUDIENCE

[Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Library]





the state legislature to vote for the Wilmot Proviso; Wentworth and E. D. Baker alone of the Illinois delegation did so in the house. The final passage of the compromise set Illinois forward as the savior of the Union; and Stephen A. Douglas, her brilliant young senior senator, stood forth as the representative of the union sentiment of the West.

In northern Illinois sentiment had been divided between sentiment for the Proviso and sentiment for the Union. The dread of danger to the Union prevailed. Douglas, returning from Washington to Chicago on one of the great triumphs of his career, October 23, won over a hostile meeting to resolutions in support of the compromise as necessary to the Union. The Free Soil strength passed as suddenly as it arose; and the great majority of party men in Illinois accepted the compromise; but the democrats found it expedient to nominate for governor in 1852, Joel A. Matteson, a protege of Wentworth, at this time supposed to be so decidedly anti-slavery that a radical like Jonathan B. Turner was ready to vote for him.

In 1852 Illinois offered a candidate for the national democratic nomination in Douglas, the champion of the Union and the savior of the compromise of 1850. He was a young man's candidate; but *The Democratic Review*, his national organ, was too outspoken against "old-fogyism"



in the party; and the old fogies had their revenge in the nomination of Franklin Pierce. Pierce easily carried Illinois, but discontent in the northern districts with the proslavery attitude of his party elected to congress three whigs pledged to free soil, and again elected John Wentworth in the Chicago district in spite of the fact that his opposition to the democratic platform on the point of slavery was well known. The passage by the General Assembly in 1853, in accord with the state constitution, of an act<sup>1</sup> allowing free blacks who entered the state to be sold into terms of servitude aroused indignation among democrats and whigs alike. It was said less than half a dozen papers in the state openly approved the law.

With the inauguration of Pierce in 1853, the old issues of politics seemed worn out. Regular democrats wished to keep away from the issues of the compromise of 1850. Bank, tariff and sub-treasury seemed dead. Douglas and the western democrats were pushing a graduation act actually passed in 1854 selling unsold lands for as little as twelve and one-half cents an acre; they were advocates of a homestead measure; but they could hardly commit their party to it. Douglas was endeavoring to get rid of the river and harbor issue that was perplexing the party in Illinois by proposing the levy of tonnage duties for local internal

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<sup>1</sup> Drawn by John A. Logan, *Chicago Tribune*, Jan. 16, 1865.

improvements at the place of collection; above all he was for expansion; for a Pacific railroad for the extension of white settlement to the regions of the Upper Missouri. This led him to the fatal Kansas Nebraska Bill and to the repeal of the Missouri Compromise that split his party and the union.

The motives of the man responsible for the Kansas Nebraska Act and the repeal of the Missouri Compromise have been speculated over by historians for almost three-quarters of a century; and historians have as yet come to no agreement. Was it a damnable betrayal of the interests of the free North, opening the Great Plains, north of the 1820 line of  $36^{\circ} 30'$  to slavery, and designed to purchase the vote of the slave-holding south for the Presidency? Was it a bargain in which the North got the undoubted advantage of the location of a railroad to the Pacific with its terminals in the North, in return for the concession to the South of the empty right to carry slaves to a territory where nature had decreed that slavery could not thrive? Was the repeal of the compromise of 1820 the fruit of factional warfare in Missouri? Did Douglas sacrifice it on the altar of opening the territories to settlement? Or did Douglas really believe that the doctrine of popular sovereignty—that right of the people of the territory to determine untrammelled by congres-

sional action past or present the conditions of their life—was a carrying to new heights of the old frontier democracy of Jackson? Mortal man can only surmise.

At all events late in 1853 Douglas introduced in the senate his bill for the organization of Kansas and Nebraska Territories, with its provision for popular choice in the territory in the territorial stage between freedom and slavery. Later he admitted the amendment, repealing the part of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 that forever prohibited slavery in the Louisiana purchase above 36° 30'. Despite opposition from northern whigs and some northern democrats, he and his chief lieutenant in the house, William A. Richardson, congressman from the Quincy district and chairman of the House committee on territories, drove the Kansas Nebraska act through. His colleague in the senate, Shields, supported him; but in the house the four whig congressmen, with two democrats, John Wentworth and William H. Bissell, a majority of the delegation opposed it. By the time the measure had finally passed the Northwest was all in a flame.

The Republican party had its beginning in these days in the coalescence of whigs and anti-slavery or anti-Nebraska democrats with more radical anti-slavery groups into a new party based on opposition to slavery in the territories. In the

states surrounding Illinois the reaction was almost instantaneous. In Illinois it took a year or two. The whigs generally opposed the repeal of the Missouri Compromise from the first; so did the anti-Nebraska democrats; but both held aloof from the comparatively insignificant republican party, which was at first made up largely of the more extreme free soil or abolitionist elements. In 1856 the extreme abolitionist elements withdrew; a great part of the anti-Nebraska democrats entered it, and most of the whigs, save the group that rallied round the anti-Catholic anti-foreign element to form the Know Nothing party and those who sought refuge in the democratic ranks.

At the beginning the leadership of the Illinois democratic party was against Douglas. Even old wheel horses whose political careers were mainly in the past, like Sidney Breese and John Reynolds, were anti-Nebraska, perhaps because they hoped for a return to power from Douglas' overthrow. But the ablest men of Douglas' own political generation, John Wentworth, John A. McClernand, William H. Bissell, Lyman Trumbull, and the best of the younger men, such as John M. Palmer, were also in the opposition. September first Douglas tried for hours to defend the bill before a howling Chicago mob, finally shouting, "It is now Sunday morning — I'll go to church, and you

may go to Hell!"<sup>1</sup> Newspapers, public meetings without regard to party, protested. It was small satisfaction under the circumstances that county conventions in central and southern Illinois generally endorsed the Nebraska doctrine.

As early as March 18, 1854, at Rockford a mass meeting resolved that "The free States should now blot out all former political distinctions by uniting themselves into one great Northern Party."<sup>2</sup> The movement was slow in developing. The anti-Nebraska democrats hoped to control their party on the issue and not divide it. The whigs tried to maintain their distinct organization on anti-Nebraska lines and capitalize the issue to carry the state they had been seeking in vain for twenty years to win. At Ottawa on August 1 the extreme antislavery elements in imitation of those in Wisconsin and Michigan first assumed the name republican, but when a republican convention was held at Springfield October 4 and 5, it was distinctly of a free soil cast. Lincoln with his eyes on the senatorship at whig hands adroitly stayed away and failed to act on a state committee to which the convention appointed him.

With the anti-Nebraska elements holding aloof from each other the congressional elections of

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<sup>1</sup> Cole, *Era of the Civil War*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> *Rock River Democrat*, March 28, 1854.

1854 were a strange affair. In the Chicago district there was a four-cornered race between an anti-Nebraska democrat endorsed by Wentworth, a Nebraska democrat, a whig and a republican, James H. Woodworth, the republican, winning. Elihu B. Washburne and Jesse O. Norton, anti-Nebraska whigs, were endorsed by the republicans and elected in the first and third districts. In the Alton district Lyman Trumbull, running as an anti-Nebraska democrat with whig support beat Foulke, convention nominee and a Nebraska democrat. James Knox was reelected in the Peoria district. But in the Springfield, Quincy, Decatur, and Cairo districts Douglas or Nebraska democrats were successful. The general assembly elected in the fall was anti-Nebraska, and it had to elect a senator. Lincoln nearly succeeded. He had the votes of the members of the whig antecedents, but could not gain the necessary anti-Nebraska democrats, and finally, rather than see Matteson elected, he threw the whig strength to the anti-Nebraska democrat, Lyman Trumbull.

The election of 1854 had made evident a sharp sectional division in the state.

"In the Northern half of Illinois" said the *Chicago Weekly Democrat*, December 2, 1854, "not a Congressman nor member of the Legislature, nor a county officer friendly to the Nebraska bill, or opposed to Harbor and River Improve-



ments, has been elected to any office this year—Whilst in the southern half, all of two-thirds of the men elected are of opposite sentiments!

“This is accounted for in the fact that the northern half of Illinois is settled generally by emigrants from the free states, whilst the southern half is settled by those from the slave states.”

For a year or two there was political chaos; and it was the opportunity of the native Americans or Know Nothings. They represented the old anti-foreign and anti-Catholic prejudices of the whigs and offered a shelter for members of that group hard pressed to decide between the anti-slavery and democratic groupings. The existence of this group temporarily helped to check a movement of the anti-slavery foreign groups such as the Germans from the democratic party because it was represented to them that the anti-Nebraska men must be nativists. Further, they distrusted the New England republicans in northern Illinois as “Maine Law men” or prohibitionists. In the course of 1855 schism developed even in the fraternal ranks of the Know Nothings, a more liberal group known by the cant term of “Jonathan” being anti-slavery and merely anti-Catholic as distinguished from “Sam,” who was inclined to be Nebraska and anti-foreign generally. Representing a prejudice rather than a principle there was little stability in the Know Noth-



ing group.

The approach of the presidential year compelled the anti-Nebraska democrats to choose finally between their principles and their party. In convention at Decatur the anti-Nebraska editors of the state reached harmony in the winter of 1856. At a convention held at Bloomington, May 29, the republican party was formed. Whigs like Orville H. Browning imparted a tone of conservatism to its platform. The brains and conscience of the democratic party, Wentworth, Koerner, Bissell, Trumbull, John M. Palmer, threw in their lot with the new party. Breese, Reynolds, McClernand fell back into the old line. Save for the American group the whigs disappeared. Some of them, such as E. B. Webb, their candidate for Governor in 1852, J. W. Singleton, and R. S. Blackwell, joined the democrats. At last the lines were clearly drawn.

The Presidential election of 1856 was hotly fought. Buchanan in Illinois was barely successful over Fremont. But four republican and four democratic congressmen were elected, and the state ticket headed by William H. Bissell was victorious over Richardson and the democrats. For the first time since party lines had been sharply drawn in Illinois the democrats had been defeated in a state election. Sectional parties had been formed in the union, and had taken root in

the state also. A sharp geographical line divided republicans and democrats. It followed the southern boundaries of Henderson, Warren, Knox, Stark, Marshall counties, and swung to the south to include McLean, Logan, Piatt and Coles. Tazewell, Macon and Edgar were debatable; republican outposts in the south lay in Edwards, Madison, Bond and St. Clair. The citadels of the two parties lay respectively in a group of northern counties stretching diagonally northeast from Henry to Du Page and Lake and in the old democratic bloc between the Mississippi and Wabash Rivers.

## CHAPTER XI

THE CLIMAX OF THE SLAVERY STRUGGLE 1856-  
1865

OUT of the Kansas Nebraska Act came the formation of the republican party; on the heels of the Dred Scott Decision and the Lecompton Constitution followed the Civil War. Douglas in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise had lightly unchained the demon of sectional strife over the territories; and the demon's first act had been to tear from Douglas' hand the best of the democracy of the North. The appetite of the slaveholding South for territorial expansion had been roused; and vainly did Douglas try to appease it with what the remnant of his northern following would suffer him to allow it. Trying desperately to keep together the democrats of North and South by some possible compromise, both to favor his own ambitions and to save the party, he fought his losing battle magnificently, unscrupulously, heroically. In the end he saw the prize he had followed so long escape him, and fall into the hands of his old opponent, Abraham Lincoln. Sinking his personal ambitions in his love for the Union on the eve of a civil war

such as the world had never seen he atoned for much of the sin that had caused it.

Barely had Buchanan been inaugurated in 1857 when the supreme court of the United States handed down the medley of divergent opinions known in our history as the Dred Scott Decision. Starting with the simple question as to whether a slave carried to a free state and to a territory made free by the Missouri Compromise was thereby enfranchised Chief Justice Taney—apparently with a majority of the court behind him—laid down among other dicta, the saying that the Missouri Compromise was unlawful and that there was no power in Congress to pass a law for any territory which forbade a master to carry his slave there and hold him in bondage. But if this were true, could a territorial legislature, created by Congress do what Congress could not do? And if so what became of popular sovereignty, the right of the people of a territory to decide for themselves whether they would have freedom or slavery?

The democrats of Illinois hesitated for a little as to what course they would pursue. Then Douglas came back from Washington and taught his followers the comforting doctrine that the Decision buttressed popular sovereignty; for without the positive police protection that a territorial legislature might give or deny the peculiar

institution, slavery could not exist. The republicans were in a more immediate quandary, if not so deep a one. Their principle of Free Soil had been swept away by the work of the aged chief justice. They must gainsay the highest court of the land, or admit their most precious principle was unconstitutional. Lincoln in answering Douglas at Springfield, June 26, 1857, promised for his party acquiescence for the time being in the decision, but also an unalterable resolve that some day that decision should be reversed by the court itself. Both parties waited upon the turn of events in Kansas, and the decision of the voters of Illinois.

Douglas speedily found himself bearing the burden of obloquy earned for him by southern fire eaters determined to win Kansas for slavery by fraud or force. In 1857 the infamous Lecompton Constitution, drawn by a pro-slavery packed convention, was presented to Congress, the voters having been allowed to decide only whether they would have the constitution drawn in every line to protect slavery, "with slavery" or "without slavery." Such a travesty on popular sovereignty Douglas knew would alienate the majority of his democratic following in Illinois. Anxious for his reelection as senator by the General Assembly to be selected in 1858, he appeared at the state fair in the fall of 1857 to sound public sentiment. At

the next session of Congress he broke with Buchanan's administration and opposed the passage of the Lecompton Constitution.

"Mr. Douglas," said the President rising to his feet excitedly — so Douglas told the story of their final break — "I desire you to remember that no Democrat ever yet differed from an administration of his own choice without being crushed. Beware of the fate of Tallmadge and Rives." "Mr. President," rejoined Douglas also rising, "I wish you to remember that General Jackson is dead."<sup>1</sup>

Perhaps Buchanan may have remembered the days of 1838-9 when the party lash drove the Illinois Congressmen into line for the subtreasury, and have hoped to repeat the triumph. But as Douglas had reminded him, General Jackson was dead. Eastern republicans, believing Douglas would carry with him but a handful of revolvers, prepared to welcome him into the republican ranks. Horace Greeley sent E. B. Washburne to Illinois to announce that Lincoln must not be run against Douglas for the senatorship. But Western republicans knew better. The "Little Giant's" stand had awakened the enthusiasm of the remaining democrats of Illinois save for a corporal's guard of office holders. Every democratic paper in the state approved his course. Buchanan, to defeat Douglas, mustered his little

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<sup>1</sup> Allen Johnson, *Douglas*, p. 328.





STUMP SPEAKING

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group of Lecompton office holders and subsidized presses, strong in federal patronage and little else, led by worn out politicians like John Reynolds and Sidney Breese, cringing from forty years of political meannesses. In moral stature and political honesty Douglas exceeded such men even more than he was exceeded in conscience by such republican leaders as Wentworth, Palmer, Trumbull and Lincoln.

Ostensibly the political contest of 1858 turned on the election of a state general assembly to choose a senator. Breese, the Buchanan or "Danite" candidate, had no chance of success, his only hope being to revenge Buchanan on Douglas for his revolt against the administration. Avowedly they planned to elect Lincoln rather than Douglas. "He [Dougherty] told Lincoln that the National Democracy intended 'to run in every county and District a National Democrat for each and every office'" — Lincoln replied to this by saying: "If you do this the thing is settled — the battle is fought."<sup>1</sup> Between Douglas and Lincoln was the race, the issues being which one was to speak Illinois' repudiation of the administration and the crime against Kansas, and whether that rebuke was to be couched in terms of moderation or of free soil. Both men were put forward

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<sup>1</sup> Trumbull Mss., Library of Congress; Herndon to Trumbull, July 8, 1858.

by party conventions, the republican convention declaring Lincoln its "first and only choice." In the famous "House divided against itself Speech" delivered the evening of his nomination, Lincoln indicated the principle of his campaign; that to oppose the proslavery excesses of the administration in Kansas as Douglas purposed was merely to apply palliatives to the evil; instead once and for all it must be decided whether slavery was to spread and strike new runners in free soil everywhere or whether, cut back stiffly to its present bounds, it was to exhaust the soil on which it grew, dwindle, and finally decay.

In the old frontier fashion Lincoln set out to ride the political circuit after Douglas. Finding himself reduced often to serve as a sort of anticlimax to audiences gathered for the "Little Giant," he challenged Douglas to a joint debate. Douglas agreed to debate with him once in each of the seven congressional districts he had yet to visit, at Ottawa, Freeport, Jonesboro, Charleston, Galesburg, Quincy, and Alton. Into the resulting debate was poured all the skill in handling, holding, and winning vast outdoor audiences developed in forty years of frontier stump speaking, exemplified by two of its greatest masters. At the end neither could claim the victory.

The moral victory in the debate lay with Lincoln. Douglas defending the principles of the

old democracy, was compelled to expound them as ensuring liberties to the white man only. The solution of the territorial difficulty he offered was necessarily based on expediency and on fine drawn constitutional quibbles. Trumbull, assisting Lincoln, had shown that Douglas in 1856 had cut out of a bill for the admission of Kansas a clause allowing a popular vote on the future state Constitution. The commentary on popular sovereignty was an unpleasant one. At Freeport Lincoln forced his opponent once more to a restatement of the doctrine that unfriendly legislation by a territorial legislature was a legal and sufficient means to keep slavery out of the territory, the famous Freeport Heresy. Lincoln rose to greater heights than pinning his shifty antagonist on a legal quibble that would gain him no favor at the South. In a moment of vision he announced the whole question as essentially a moral issue, the issue of the right or wrong of the oppression and exploitation of labor whether slave or free. The former whig had ascended to the heights of the old democratic doctrine.

That is the real issue. That is the issue that will continue in this country when these poor tongues of Judge Douglas and myself shall be silent. It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world. They are the two principles that have

stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. The one is the common right of humanity, and the other the "divine right of kings." It is the same principle in whatever shape it develops itself. It is the same spirit that says, "You work and toil and earn bread, and I'll eat it." No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical principle.<sup>1</sup>

The moral victory was with Lincoln, but the senatorship fell to Douglas. Both Douglas and Lincoln had struggled for the old whig vote in central Illinois, each claiming to be the true successor of Henry Clay; and Lincoln's success had been but partial. "Before us lies the field . . . ." wrote Herndon in 1858 after Lincoln's defeat. "It is in Sangamon—Morgan—Madison—Logan—Mason; in short it is a circle of counties reaching not more than 80 miles from the capitol. The people that live in that area must be somehow reached; and now. *Secondly* who are these people; they are from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia &c; and generally they are "*old-line*" whigs—timid—shrinking, but good, men."<sup>2</sup> In the popular vote Lincoln car-

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<sup>1</sup> Alton Debate—*Lincoln Douglas Debates*. Sparks Ed. p. 485.

<sup>2</sup> Trumbull Mss., Library of Congress; Herndon to Trumbull, Nov. 30, 1858.

ried through to victory the republican state candidates for Treasurer and Superintendent of Public Instruction. But since the state had been distriated northern population had been pouring into Illinois. The "unterrified" democracy of Egypt elected more than its proportion of legislators and in spite of the Danites or Buchanan men, Douglas was reelected by 54 votes to 41.

The election meant that the pivotal state of the Northwest, formerly its democratic stronghold, had returned Douglas in spite of administration intrigues and republican strength, as a rebuke to Buchanan. The victory designated Douglas as the presidential candidate for whom the remaining democrats of the Northwest would vote in 1860. But by that law of mass that teaches the tactician to oppose his main force to the main force of the enemy, the victory had designated also Abraham Lincoln as Douglas' opponent. November 1, 1858, the *Olney Times* put the name of Lincoln at the head of its columns for president. By the next summer Lincoln was sweeping on in Illinois and his strength was beginning to develop in surrounding states of the northwest. His famous Cooper Union speech of February, 1860, introduced him to the East as well.

Many factors contributed to his progress. The outstanding republican candidate was William H.

Seward. But Illinois republicans remembered that he and Greeley had tried to side track Lincoln for Douglas in 1858.

"Now that Seward, Greeley & Co. have contributed so much to our defeat," wrote Ebenezer Peck to Trumbull, November 30, 1858, "they may expect us in the true christian spirit to return good for evil—but in this I fear they will find themselves mistaken. If the vote of Illinois can nominate another than Seward—I hope it will be so cast. The coals of fire I would administer, will be designed to raise a severe blister."<sup>1</sup>

Seward's doctrine that there was a higher law than the constitution injured him with the conservative republicans. Of other candidates, Edward Bates of Missouri, favored by Browning because he could get old whig votes that Lincoln could not, was displeasing to the Germans. The republican state convention instructed the Illinois delegation for Lincoln.

Tremendously in Lincoln's favor was the fact that the national republican convention was to be held in Chicago in the famous wigwam on Lake Street. The local atmosphere was cleverly manipulated by Illinois republican leaders, and delegation after delegation by addresses, by persuasion, by bargains was won over to favor Lincoln's candidacy. The wigwam packed with Lin-

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<sup>1</sup> Trumbull Mss., Library of Congress.



coln supporters, in the galleries, at the name of Lincoln gave a "yawp" that put to shame the followers of Seward. The swing of anti-Seward votes to the candidate who seemed to have the best chance to defeat the New Yorker, nominated Lincoln on the third ballot. In outward harmony the republicans adjourned.

With the democrats it was otherwise. After his reelection in 1859 Douglas had turned now this way, now that, seeking to conciliate both North and South. In spite of his concessions, in spite of his attempts to win Southern sentiment and at the same time obtain a platform that would save the North, his party split. In the democratic convention at Charleston, South Carolina, the Douglas men voted down resolutions which stated in Calhoun's old uncompromising style the right of slavery in the territories as a national institution; they offered the subservient platform of 1856 and acquiescence in the Dred Scott Decision, but all to no purpose. The irreconcilables withdrew; and when Douglas was finally nominated at Richmond, John C. Breckenridge was set up by the Southern democrats to run against him, and John Bell, of Tennessee, appeared for a little whig remnant known as the Constitutional Unionists.

The campaign in Illinois was between Douglas and Lincoln, republican and regular democrat.

The vote for Bell and Breckenridge was insignificant. Douglas threw himself desperately into the campaign, in defiance of precedent himself taking the stump. When the loss of Pennsylvania in October told him all hope was gone, he went South on a speaking tour, this time to endeavor to prevent the worst consequences. On the Illinois state ticket for the republicans Richard Yates had obtained the nomination for governor over the better known N. B. Judd. His democratic opponent, James C. Allen was nominated late, by a party jaded by the long struggle over Douglas' nomination. John T. Stuart, run by the Constitutional Union element, offered but little opposition. The republicans carried the state by 12,000.

In those critical days of December, 1860, and January, 1861, the future chief magistrate of the nation was in the state capital of Illinois. The situation made Governor-elect Richard Yates in a sense the spokesman of the new national administration when in his inaugural he stood against any concession or compromise with the South. The democrats holding a convention at Springfield professed themselves loyal to the Union, but also in favor of attempts at compromise with the South. To a great extent public opinion was still with them on this, and reluctantly Lincoln and Yates sent an Illinois delegation to the Peace convention called by Virginia at Washington.

State politics, too, were at cross purposes. The General Assembly of 1859 had tried to gerrymander the state to continue the control of the legislature to the democrats. Governor Bissell had vetoed the bill and the republicans, absenting themselves to break up a quorum, had prevented the passage of the gerrymander, but also the passage of the appropriation bills. The General Assembly of 1861 passed an act districting the state on republican lines and as a sop to the democrats an act calling a constitutional convention. A bill for the reorganization of the state militia the democrats would not submit to and it was put aside at the end of the session.

The actual military participation of Illinois in the war will be taken up in a later chapter. Here the discussion of the attitude of the people to the administration, to the rebellion, and to slavery will be concluded.

The news of the firing on Fort Sumter and the vigorous measures by which Lincoln meant to deal with the rebellion threatened for the moment to break the commonwealth of Illinois into its component substances. Southern Illinois at first blazed with sympathy for the confederacy. At Marion in Williamson county a meeting of southern Illinois men was held intended to be preparatory to setting up Egypt as a separate state and allying with the confederacy. The evidence is

debatable, but it points strongly to the fact that John A. Logan at the first leaned toward the South. The least danger to be feared was that southern Illinois might be a recruiting ground for the confederacy. Douglas flung himself into the breach. In Illinois he spent his last strength urging democrats to put the nation before the party and to hold up the hands of the Black Republican president while he labored for the perpetuation of the Union. Speaking before the special session of the Illinois legislature, he urged on both parties the subordination of partisanship to patriotism. A life of political combat, the last seven years of it desperately fought, had sapped his vitality and he died June 9, 1861. He had been the unconscious instrument to let loose the flood of civil war; but by his desperate efforts to stop it he had atoned for the error.

Douglas had won over most of the democrats of southern Illinois. Logan and McClernand, the latter always a union democrat, led their section to the support of Yates' war policy and led the fighting men of their section to the battle field. Southern Illinois was even to exceed the North in its quota of soldiers. Enthusiasm for the Union swept the whole state and put the seal of approval on the militia act, and the other vigorous war measures of the special session of the legislature.

But difference of opinion still lay deep in the heterogeneous population of Illinois. Douglas had brought the mass of the democracy to support loyally the war for the Union; he had not tried to convert them to the republican free soil doctrine and thereby to stultify the record of his party for the last ten years. On the other hand zealous republicans preached a crusade against slavery and chafed bitterly at Lincoln's slowness to proclaim it. When General Fremont issued his proclamation, as commander of Missouri, freeing the slaves of rebels, and Lincoln disallowed it, there was deep discontent. When Lincoln removed him in November there was an outcry, and a bitter one. "The repudiation by Mr. Lincoln of Fremont's Proclamation manumitting the slaves of Missouri rebels, gave more '*aid and comfort to the enemy*' in that state than if he had made the rebel commander, Sterling Price, a present of fifty pieces of rifled cannon."<sup>1</sup>

The much tried president meanwhile was struggling with the problem of steering a course that would keep the support of the loyal men of the North. With radicals like Trumbull pressing for extreme measures, and conservatives like Senator Orville H. Browning striving to confirm him in the paths of moderation he was torn between forces

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<sup>1</sup> Trumbull Mss., Library of Congress; John Russell to Trumbull, Bluffdale, Dec. 17, 1861.

diametrically opposed. When Trumbull pressed the drastic second confiscation act on him in 1862, Browning warned him that he stood at the parting of the ways and that signing it he walked with the radicals to ruin. When Lincoln, at last believing that slavery should be cauterized, issued the First Emancipation Proclamation, Browning mourned over him. When he issued the second, Browning gave him up in despair.

The impossibility of Lincoln's waging the war to please both antislavery republicans and union democrats for a time threw the state into the hands of the democrats. In the constitutional convention elected in the fall of 1861 the democrats outnumbered the republicans two to one. In spite of the fact that Yates believed it honeycombed with secession, it contented itself with drawing up a constitution that sought to restore the old simple bankless rural Illinois that had passed never to return. Wentworth supported it, but it was beaten at the polls by a majority of 16,051.

The emancipation proclamation, and arbitrary arrests for disloyal utterances in 1862, so Browning believed, turned the state over to a rabidly democratic legislature, that elected William A. Richardson to succeed him in the senate.<sup>1</sup> The

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<sup>1</sup> He had been appointed by Yates to fill out Douglas' term until an election by the General Assembly could take place.



democrats in defending the Black Laws of 1853 urged their necessity to save white labor in the state from competition from free negroes. The flood of "contrabands" pouring in by way of Cairo gave point to their argument. They passed in the house resolutions for an armistice and a peace convention at Louisville; their apportionment bill was vetoed by Yates, and before they could pass it over his veto the governor prorogued the legislature.

June 17, a democratic mass convention of 40,000 denounced the arbitrary use of war powers and called for a national convention to negotiate peace. In local copperhead movements, in the *Chicago Times* suppressed for a day for disloyalty, the dissatisfaction with the war powers found vent. A plot was unearthed in November, 1864, to release the confederate prisoners at Camp Douglas located in what is now the heart of the south side of Chicago.

Meanwhile the time approached for another presidential election. Lincoln in his middle course was still too timid and conservative for the radicals, too radical for the conservatives in his own party. For a time there was a real enthusiasm for Fremont among the out and outers, especially among the German republicans. The party necessity for standing by the record, as embodied in the president, compelled the renomina-



tion of Lincoln; but Fremont was nominated independently.

The democrats meanwhile were in a position less difficult at first sight, but still quite perplexing. They could not well denounce the war as a failure without alienating thousands of loyal war democrats; of that General McClellan, their presidential candidate, was the first to remind them. Still their position even on the platform that the war was a failure was a strong one. But the military events of the fall of 1864 disproved their case. Farragut at Mobile, Sherman at Atlanta, Sheridan in the Shenandoah, were demonstrating that the war was not a failure, that the confederacy was doomed. Fremont withdrew from the race. Logan aroused Illinois for Lincoln and the election resulted in a majority for him of 30,736. Not three months later, February 1, 1865, the republican general assembly ratified the thirteenth amendment forever abolishing slavery. At the same session the Black Laws were finally wiped off the Illinois statute book.

Hardly eleven years had passed since Douglas had reopened the slavery question in the repeal of the Missouri Compromise. Since then the whig party had disappeared, and the democratic party had been torn by the secession of its best men. By 1864 it had sunk definitely in the state it had ruled for a generation to a minority party good

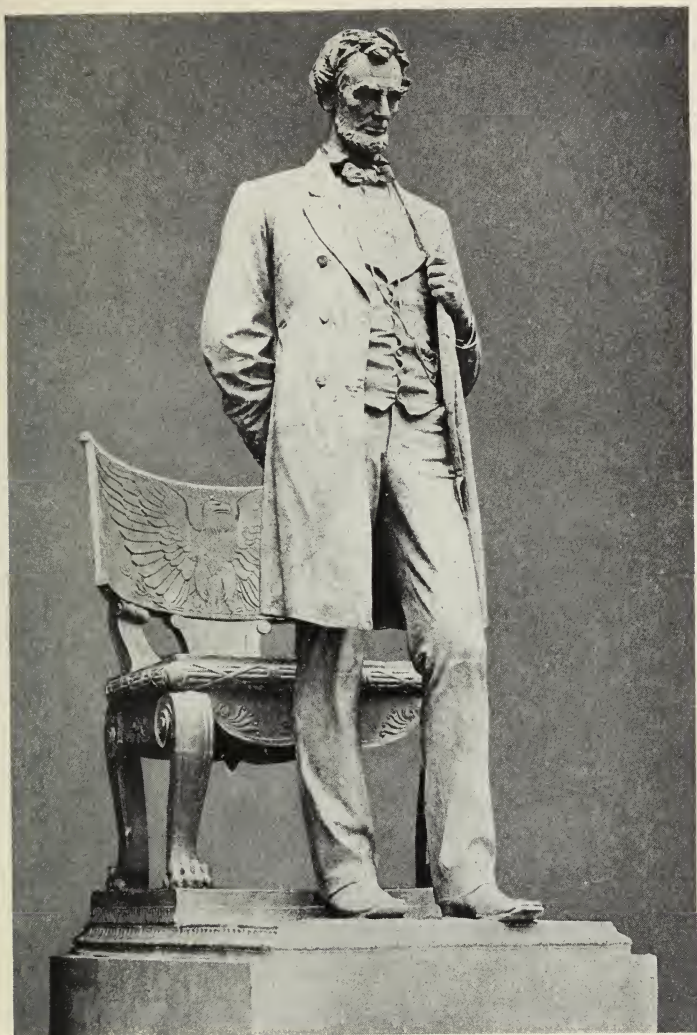
for little but an agency of rebuke to the republicans. The republican party had taken its place; for a time taking over the old democratic doctrines of the rights of men, but now seeking to combine them with the old whig care for capital and vested interests. In the days of confusion men had changed sides fast. Old time whigs like Browning had become republicans, and in dislike of the radical policies of Lincoln shifted to the democratic party. Zealous anti-Nebraska democrats of 1854 like John Reynolds had in the days of the war walked very close to the edge of disloyalty. Democrats like John A. Logan, accused of advising men in 1861 to enlist in the southern army, were to become the highest prophets of republicanism. Democrats like John M. Palmer led by principles rather than party allegiance, had been led by them to the republican party in 1856 and ultimately were to follow them back to the democratic group. Leaders and groups winnowed vigorously by the great days of 1854-1865 were at length to find their places again in the republican and democratic ranks, but in arrangements hardly to be foreseen from their previous associations.

The spring of 1865 came, and the Civil War was over; the United States flag was dramatically unfurled over Fort Sumpter on the day five years before on which Major Anderson had lowered it.

Then came the assassination of Lincoln and the bearing back of his body to its rest till eternity at Springfield. In his tomb was buried the enmity of those who had opposed him in life. Even the *Chicago Times*, his savage critic, added its tribute:

It is hard to conceive of the occurrence of any event which would be so shocking to the sensibilities of the country, occasion sorrow so profound, and create apprehensions and forebodings so painful, as the event which today absorbs all minds and agitates the public heart to its lowest depths. Since the 4th of March last a higher estimate has been put upon Mr. Lincoln's life, and more voices have ascended to Heaven that it might be spared, than before. Since that time all men have realized something of the magnitude of the concerns involved in his lease of existence, and have shuddered at the thought of the possibility of his death. It is not chiefly the manner of his death—awful as that was—that so moves the national mind. It is not this, but it is that at this present crisis of the country—more important and critical than any through which it has passed—the presidential mantle falls upon the shoulders of a man in whom nobody feels confidence. . . .

There are not on this day mourners more sincere than the democracy of these northern states. Widely as they have differed with Mr. Lincoln—greatly as their confidence in him had been shaken—they yet saw in the indications of the last few days of his life that he might command their



STATUE OF LINCOLN  
Lincoln Park, Chicago



support in the close of the war, as he did in the beginning. . . .<sup>1</sup>

Rare instances were reported of individuals who exulted at his death; on almost every case they met with private condemnation or public prosecution. The apotheosis of Lincoln was at hand.

Long since it has come to pass that the counsel of Abraham Lincoln is as if one enquired of the oracle of God. His writings are searched for sayings that may be used on either side of every question of public policy in the present day. As the historian, discarding present day tradition studies in the light of Lincoln's own day that character that has been accepted as the incarnation of democracy in peoples and nations of which he never heard, it becomes strangely complex. At first sight Lincoln appears an astute politician seeking by honorable means the advancement of his party and his individual welfare, in ways he thinks for his country's good. By the time he has reached the presidency he has learned to measure his course by the will of the people. While still he seeks that will his contemporaries call him timorous and cowardly; when once he has found and executes it they condemn him as ruthless; with small effect on him in either case. At times the politician and statesman seems possessed with a

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<sup>1</sup> *Chicago Times*, Apr. 17, 1866.

spirit, an oracle of the Divine will; and there fall from his lips sayings of superhuman wisdom, of liberty, of democracy, of the dignity of labor, of the brotherhood of man, of mercy to the vanquished; and politician and statesman are alike forgotten in the god.

The death of Lincoln marked the end of the heroic age of Illinois history. In the great struggle as to whether the United States for the sake of union and democracy should temporize with slavery or should cast it out altogether, Illinois had furnished leaders and ideals in the persons of Douglas and Lincoln; in support of the man who with his policy she had chosen, she had borne her full share in a mighty war that had taken terrible toll of her best. The enthusiasm for the ideal was to pass because human nature cannot as yet long sustain the ideal; and to it were to succeed the ages of bronze and of iron.



## CHAPTER XII

### THE CIVIL WAR AND ITS AFTERMATH, 1861-68

IT IS inevitable for one in this generation writing of Illinois' part in the Civil War to compare it with her part in the World War. The Civil War was a far simpler affair; not a tithe, perhaps not a hundredth, of the expenditure in ordnance, ammunition and equipment of 1917-18 was required to furnish forth the armies of 1861-65 for the battle field. Illinois was just becoming industrial at the outbreak of the war; hence the burdens laid on her industry were trivial by comparison with those of 1918. In 1861-2 her wheat fields were important as contributing a share of the grain that Europe needed to supplement her crop failures and must secure from the United States at the price of neutrality; but the problem of helping to feed half embattled Europe in 1918 was a far greater one. In man power, however, her Civil War offering was far greater by proportion than that of the World War. Counting enlistments of all lengths and reenlistments, her total lay somewhere about 250,000. Of these 5,857 were killed in action, 3,051 died of wounds and 19,934 of disease. The number

came near that which she supplied from a far greater population in 1917-18; the number of casualties was far greater.

The troops for two years poured in by volunteering; but 3,538 men entered the service by the draft. Had the recruiting enthusiasm of the earlier years been left unchecked even that small number might have been reduced. For it was the unfortunate policy of the War Department to discourage recruiting in earlier years and then have recourse to the draft. Illinois, too, made her mistake in not adopting a replacement system such as that of Wisconsin. She raised regiment after regiment by volunteering to the number of one hundred and fifty infantry, and seventeen cavalry regiments, and thirty-three batteries; in most cases these units were sent under fire untrained, suffered heavy casualties, and then instead of being filled up by recruits who would learn to be soldiers and acquire *esprit de corps* from the veterans, were kept as weak organizations, while new volunteer regiments were raised to afford commissions to inexperienced but ambitious officers. The toll in lives paid by this policy was a heavy one.

The share of Lincoln's first call of 75,000 allotted to the state was overfilled by five days volunteering with six regiments. The legislature, meeting in special session, appropriated to equip

ten new regiments of infantry, one of cavalry and four batteries. By June all were accepted by the government. Four additional cavalry regiments were raised before the disaster at Bull Run, sixteen more regiments after it. Recruiting was at flood tide. The War Department could not be induced to accept over a fourth of the companies offered; men enlisted in Missouri regiments. By October Illinois had more regiments in the service than New York. In December she had 60,000 men in the army. During 1862 under the pressure of a state enrollment she more than doubled the number. It was perhaps unfortunate; for a system of enrollment and draft could have been used to fill old organizations; volunteering merely multiplied companies and regiments.

March 3, 1863, Senator Trumbull's conscription act went into effect; but through 1863 volunteering went on so rapidly that January 1, 1864, Illinois was far in excess of her quota of 145,000. In the summer of 1864 she was still in excess, and in many districts of the state a draft wheel never turned. The draft would undoubtedly have furnished a more efficient army; and there were unpleasant aspects to the workings of the system that actually obtained. The volunteering by companies which kept the state's quota ahead of the drafts often traded on the personal popularity of would-be officers totally unfit to command men in

action; such companies were raised often by most liberal bounties and bonuses. In 1864 volunteers in Rockford received as high a bounty as \$400. Substitutes could be furnished for the draft; and at first exemption could be purchased for a payment of \$300. Substitute brokers did their unsavory business in the West; and the man who enlisted as a substitute was quite likely to desert and earn another substituting fee. There were local insurance associations to insure men drafted of exemption through purchase of substitutes.

But the sordid nature of the service of a few men cannot detract from the devotion of hundreds of thousands. Illinois not only did her full duty in sending troops; she showed herself true in her historical mission as a political bond of union to men of divers sections and divers races. From the old South, from Kentucky and Tennessee had come very many of her first settlers in the southern counties; and after their first reaction of sympathy with the South had passed their devotion to the Union put the Northern elements in the state to shame. October 1, 1863, the ten southern counties were credited with an excess of fifty per cent over their quota. Union county in eighteen months had furnished nineteen companies out of a voting population of 2,030, including but 157 republicans; allowing as much as possible for the enlistment of boys under twenty-one,

one wonders how many able bodied men under forty-five were left in the county. Throughout the state there was many an old man who perjured himself in swearing to his age on enlistment. The foreign elements were no less loyal than the democrats of "Egypt." Germans organized regiment after regiment officered by veterans of the "1848." There were Irish regiments, Scotch regiments; a regiment of school teachers mustered by President Hovey of Illinois State Normal; even an infantry company of young ministers.

The careers of the individual Illinois units it is impossible to follow in detail. In general, however, though they were found in every theater of the war, their main service was done in the West; for at the outbreak of hostilities the Mississippi and Ohio River boundaries of Illinois were in the zone of outposts. Southern Illinois, western Kentucky, and Missouri were factors in one military equation that would be solved according as they arrayed themselves for the Union or the Confederacy.

In the first days of the war a secession movement in southern Illinois was a danger to be reckoned with. The occupation of Cairo by Confederate forces would have made it infinitely greater; and Illinois' first duty was to garrison Cairo in sufficient strength. The next step was to throw

her weight into the balance against secession in Missouri. The campaign of 1861 in Missouri was a haphazard affair of regiments operating independently. In spite of his poor leadership Fremont during the period of his command in Missouri, touched Illinois' imagination; and she groaned in spirit when he was removed. By his action at Belmont, in November, 1861, disastrous as it seemed, Grant prevented military cooperation between the Kentucky and Missouri confederate forces. After 1861 Missouri was safe for the Union and became a less important field of action.

The military strength of Illinois was next turned upon the Confederates in western Kentucky. The confederate defensive line resting on Forts Henry and Donelson on the Tennessee and Cumberland Rivers was within a few miles of the Illinois border. Its reduction under General Grant largely with Illinois troops in February of 1862 assured the Union military control of western Kentucky. In establishing the allegiance of the border states to the Union the influence of Illinois was paramount. It is so easily taken for granted that we usually ignore the other possibility of 1861 that secessionists in Kentucky and Missouri might have made southern Illinois a seat of war.

Though after 1861 war never even approached



Illinois save in the form of guerilla raids, her military contributions to victory on more distant fields were great. At Shiloh, at Vicksburg, at Chattanooga, Illinois troops were a decisive factor. Seventy Illinois regiments were in the army with which Sherman made the Georgia campaign of 1864. In the western armies the Illinois troops had their most important part; but in all the great battles of the east they were present.

Among many brilliant feats of arms of Illinois regiments one stands out to be admired so long as cavalry is used in war; the exploit of the Sixth and Seventh Illinois and the Second Iowa Cavalry, known as Grierson's Raid. Riding night and day, dodging or baffling pursuing confederate cavalry, destroying bridges, remounting from horses commandeered or captured enroute, Grierson's brigade rode through the western confederate lines, entering them in Tennessee and coming out at the federal outposts at Baton Rouge above New Orleans. The raid destroyed needed confederate supplies and communications; above all it blinded the confederates as to the first moves of Grant's Vicksburg campaign.<sup>1</sup>

The war produced for Illinois a generation of statesman-generals. The little regular army of

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<sup>1</sup> For a brilliantly written account of the raid by a participant, Prof. Stephen A. Forbes, see *Transactions of Illinois State Historical Society*, 1907, pp. 99-130.



the United States of 1861 was for its size an admirable force, but its officers, however well they might understand their duties and the art of war in its tactical phases, could not supply enough men with the natural ability to control large affairs, or the knowledge of human nature outside the few special types that enlisted in the old army necessary to lead great masses of men fresh from civil life, who came ready to sacrifice themselves for an ideal. So long as American life remains what it is, great citizen armies drawn from civilian life must be treated differently from small professional armies; and enthusiasm, genuine natural ability, and sound common sense in an amateur officer can often atone for much lack of information about the fine points of formal guard mounting, or court martial procedure. It was not surprising that the period should have looked to its political leaders to supply men with the intelligence and leadership needed to lead the new armies; and the results were probably as good as could have been obtained by men drawn from any other walk of life, including the regular army.

Of the numerous generals credited to Illinois the service of a few is especially typical. General McClelland was in the actions of Belmont, Fort Donelson, Shiloh and Vicksburg, and later served in Louisiana and Texas. John M. Palmer served

in Missouri in 1861, at New Madrid, at Corinth, at Stone's River and Chickamauga, and in Sherman's Atlanta campaign, latterly in command of the Fourteenth Army Corps. Later he served as Department Commander in Kentucky. General John Pope earned at New Madrid and Corinth the reputation which gave him the command of the Army of the Potomac in 1862. His defeat at the Second Bull Run ended his active career. Stephen A. Hurlbut fought as a brigadier at Shiloh and as a major general commanded at Memphis and in the Department of the Gulf. Elon H. Farnsworth rose to be a brigadier general June 29, 1863. Four days later he fell in a desperate cavalry charge at Gettysburg. Richard Oglesby fought at Donelson and at Corinth, rising to the rank of Major General. He was severely wounded at Corinth and in 1864 resigned to seek the governorship on the Union ticket.

Major General John A. Logan well earned the title of the typical volunteer soldier and general of the war. At Belmont, at Donelson, where he was wounded, at Vicksburg and Resaca, at Dallas, where he was wounded again he fought gallantly and commanded skillfully. On the death of General McPherson he succeeded to the command of the Army of the Tennessee. On account of General George H. Thomas' dislike for Logan,

Thomas being the commander of the Army of the Cumberland, Sherman feared the two men could not cooperate and replaced Logan by Howard in command of the Army of the Tennessee. Without complaint Logan asked only to return to the command of his Fifteenth Army Corps in the campaign before Atlanta. Later despatched by Sherman to relieve Thomas in command at Nashville he generously allowed Thomas to retain the command and to fight the battle that annihilated Hood's army. It is easy to understand why in later years with his old soldiers Logan's military career cloaked any and every defect in his civil record.

One man whom Illinois claims as her contribution to the Civil War was to go farther than any of these men in military success and political rewards. Ulysses S. Grant had entered West Point from Ohio, had fought in the Mexican War with a good record, had left the service under a cloud as the result of intemperance in a lonely station on the Pacific Coast, and had lived for some years in a cabin on the outskirts of St. Louis, cast off by his father's family, supporting his wife and children by hauling cord wood into town. Forgiven by his father and taken into the leather business with him at Galena in Illinois, soon after the outbreak of war he had found his way to Springfield, where his knowledge of the forms

of the old regular army made him valuable to the military amateurs around Governor Yates engaged in mustering the State forces. Put in command of an undisciplined regiment, he had speedily reduced it to order. His record around Cairo in the fall of 1861 ensured his command of the army that captured Forts Henry and Donelson, and launched him in his career. The unraveling of the riddle of his military success; whether it was genius, stolidity in the face of reverses, ability to gain the confidence of his men, or the guidance of some clever staff officer, is a question for the historian of the Civil War rather than of Illinois.

Of the other military leaders of the war, McClelland's race in politics was run. John Pope was not to be a major figure in Illinois politics. John A. Logan, his flirting with secession in 1861 condoned or forgotten, was to stand as the beau ideal of the Grand Army of the Republic for long years of political service. Oglesby, returning wounded, to be elected governor in 1864, was thenceforth the darling of Illinois politics. Palmer was later to be governor, senator, and candidate for the presidency, a man whose career rings true on the note not of party, but of principle. Among civilians Richard Yates was endeared to future generations as the war governor of the state. He had stood for the utmost

effort in the carrying on of the war, had loyally supported the administration throughout, and after Fort Donelson in 1862 had organized the Illinois Sanitary Commission which thereafter functioned as the Red Cross did in the World War. He shared the popularity of the veteran generals, Logan, Oglesby and Palmer, and was to be their competitor for high office.

The first issues that these men and that Illinois had to meet in succeeding years were the national issues of reconstruction. What was the constitutional status of the former confederate states? Conquered provinces; or states whose lawful governments had been temporarily unseated by the rebellious confederacy? Did they have rights that they could demand under the constitution; or was it for the loyal states to dictate the terms of their forgiveness; what were those terms to be; and how far was it just, how far expedient to grant the negroes citizenship in the seceded states, and exclude ex-confederates from it?

At the first, many radicals convinced that Abraham Lincoln would be too merciful to rebels, regarded as a dispensation of Providence his taking off, and the succession to the presidency of Andrew Johnson, the Vice President, a Tennessee democrat, illiterate, plebeian, but loving the Union and hating the aristocratic southern planter

rebels. If Lincoln had been unwilling to chastise the rebels with whips surely Johnson would chastise them with scorpions. When Johnson in December of 1865 announced a liberal presidential policy of reconstruction, they were undeceived; and radical men in Congress set themselves to wrest out of the President's hand the power of reconstructing the southern states and to do it themselves by limiting southern representation to voting population, organizing the negroes into a republican political machine, and setting up military rule over defiant southern majorities.

As late as December of 1865, however, the republicans of Illinois were still not definitely decided to drop Johnson, and the democrats resolved to take him up. However, his veto of the civil rights and Freedman's Bureau Bills of Senator Trumbull embodying the congressional reconstruction policy, made his conduct an issue in the campaign of 1866. Some former Illinois republicans like O. H. Browning, soon to be his secretary of the interior, gathered around him. The democratic state convention of 1866 adopted Johnson and his measures and nominated a ticket of war democrats including Colonel T. Lyle Dickey for congressman at large. The republicans had previously nominated a ticket largely made up of war veterans headed by John A. Logan. The contest between Logan and Dickey



was a savage one. Logan's doubtful course in 1861 was dragged to the light; but all in vain. The reconstruction issue was the main one; and Illinois, led by her military heroes, her voting list filled with veterans of the war, was in no mood to listen to the expediency of mercy to the south. The eight hour day and greenback issues advanced by the democrats could not counteract the other issue; and Logan was elected by a majority of 50,000.

The General Assembly of 1867 had the task of electing a senator. Palmer with the support of Logan and Oglesby, contested Trumbull's reelection. But Trumbull's record from the outset of the war was the exemplification of what the republicans had stood for in the election of 1866. After the state had at their behest rebuked Johnson for vetoing the Civil Rights and Freedmen's Bureau Bills, they could not turn away from the author of these measures; and Trumbull was re-elected.

This was, however, the closing triumph of Trumbull's career. When Johnson's opposition to the congressional policy of construction led in 1868 to the attempt to impeach him, Trumbull voted for his acquittal. With the republican party united on the congressional reconstruction policy and the democrats hopelessly in the minority there was no place for him in Illinois politics;





STATUE OF STEPHEN DOUGLAS  
[Courtesy of Illinois State Historical Library]



and the official career of Trumbull, second in importance in the critical years only to those of Lincoln and Douglas, came to an honorable end.

Apart from the issue of reconstruction the issues that came to the front in Illinois in 1868 were protection and the currency. Illinois was still predominantly rural, and opposed continued protection by the high revenue tariffs of the Civil War. The failure of the republicans to put a tariff clause in the platform helped them in the state. There was something inviting, on the other hand, in the "Ohio idea" of Pendleton, espoused by the Illinois democrats, that the way to get rid of the war debts and supply the scarcity of currency in the West was to pay the bonds off in greenbacks. In spite of the fact that the democratic national convention had nominated Horatio Seymour, a hard money man, the Illinois democrats made the best of the greenback clause in the platform.

The issues of the war, however, could not be put aside.

In the present contest, the Republicans unite in demanding peace upon the basis of accomplished facts, and in consonance with lawfully-enacted statutes, and in requiring the payment of the public debt with 'the utmost good faith' to all: while the Democracy sound the tocsin of insurrection and threaten repudiation in one form or

another. He who prefers a pacific and an honorable national policy will vote for Grant and Colfax: he who prefers internecine war and bankruptcy will vote for Seymour and Blair.<sup>1</sup>

A national ticket headed by General Grant and a state ticket by John M. Palmer, could not be opposed by Horatio Seymour and John R. Eden. Again by a majority of 50,000 the republicans were successful. The men of the Civil War had entered finally into their own.

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<sup>1</sup> *Chicago Tribune*, August 4, 1868.

## CHAPTER XIII

### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL READJUSTMENT, 1870-1890

THE rural prairie commonwealth between 1870 and 1893 underwent changes that dwarf those of the preceding twenty years. Population and industry developed according to the trend taken in 1850 it is true but at an accelerated rate. From early periods of her statehood continental European races had found their way to Illinois as the land of promise; but now their coming was to be measured not in thousands, but in a thousand thousands; and not only the old races, but others whose habitat was as strange to the provincial westerner as their tongues. The first feeble beginnings of manufactures developed by the demands of the Civil War were turning into mightier and mightier industries; for some products Illinois was becoming a world source of supply. The farmer, even though learning new methods, was to find himself distanced in the race for production by the newer lands to the west. As Illinois strode toward supremacy in industry she saw a competitor or two overtake her in agriculture. New population, the necessity of ad-

justing the new industrial world to labor, the farmer's aspirations toward better things; all contributed to make the period of mighty change and profound unrest, which last the party politicians intent on their old game of politics sought to temporize with or turn to their own account.

A part of the change in population in the seventies and eighties was the old phenomenon of native population drifting in during one generation and out in the next. In 1870 41.7% of the native born in Illinois came from other states, 31.5% in 1880, 25.7% in 1890. In 1870 one-fifth of the persons born in Illinois lived outside the state, in 1880 one-fourth, in 1890 a little more. The same period in terms of rural and urban populations saw a drift to Chicago. In 1870 11.6% of the state's population lived in Chicago, in 1880, 16.3%, in 1890, 28.7%. Meanwhile the per cent of population in smaller places above 2,500 in size grew from 13.5% to 18.6%, the distinctively rural population falling from 76.6% to 55.3%. Nor is this true in percentages only. Since 1870 more and more the distinctively rural counties of the state have tended to lose population. This has continued until between 1900 and 1910 one-half the counties of Illinois showed a decline in population. Kendall was the only one to do so before 1870, but before 1880 there were nine and before 1890

twenty-eight that had done likewise.

The foreign born population of Illinois showed the most remarkable development. In 1870 there were 515,198 foreign born in the state of whom almost 225,000 had been British subjects; 203,000 Germans, 45,000 Scandinavians, 4,180 Hollanders, and 8,980 Swiss, were of Germanic blood. By 1890 the British element, including Irish, had grown only to 260,000, the German element had increased to 338,000, the Scandinavian to 126,000. There were now 26,627 Bohemians, 3,126 Hungarians, 8,407 Russians, 28,878 Poles in the grand total of 842,347. The absolute population of the state had measurably increased from 2,539,891 to 3,826,352.

The problem of course is only partially stated in the figures. The second generation of these races was often as deeply inlaid with distinctive characteristics as the first. Held aloof by the barrier of language they clung together and were easily exploited by demagogues of their own race. In the seventies native Americans protested that the Chicago city offices were apportioned among the foreign groups. Some of them had brought with them not merely their language but doctrines of working class solidarity, communism, socialism, anarchism; and in hard times they were not slow in teaching these to American fellow laborers. Skilled workmen, many of them, in contra-



distinction to American born labor, they early established trade unions and engaged in industrial war to gain their share of the profits of the period of industrial development.

That industrial development was a most amazing thing. The Civil War had given some encouragement to manufacture; in 1870 there were in the state thirty-four distinct industries, the annual value of whose products was over \$1,000,000. The seven with output above \$5,000,000 are significant, flour and grist mill, meat packing, agricultural implements, distilled liquors, planed lumber, carriages and wagons, clothing. With one exception they either prepared the products of the forest and farm for their first use, or were subservient to agriculture.

The succeeding period saw other great industries develop—iron and steel, brick and clay products, cement, the production of coal. The last named on the large scale was an affair only of the seventies in Illinois. Discovered at first on the edges of the Illinois basin or where rivers cut it, it was only slowly that coal came to be taken from the great interior fields of the basin. The Franklin and Williamson county fields have been developed since 1890.

The Illinois census of 1890 showed thirty-four industries with products of above \$5,000,000. By far the greatest was the packing industry; next

after it followed distilled liquors, foundry and machine products, flour and grist mill, iron and steel, men's clothing, agricultural implements, lumber and carpentering all above \$20,000,000. Cars, printing, furniture, malt liquors followed. Since 1870 the average number of hands per establishment had increased from 6.5 to 15, the number of establishments from 12,597 to 20,482, the number of wage earners from 82,979, to 312-198, the net value of manufactured products from \$78,020,595 to \$379,621,191.

Statistics only unsatisfactorily convey the huge growth of the period. The little packing houses, the little blacksmith shops, the carriage shops, the grist mills of the frontier community were being replaced by modern factories, where the employer was no longer master, teacher and leader, but lord of hundreds of hands, with problems of labor, wages, strikes, railroad rates, rebates, bank credits all to consider as factors of success or failure.

First of all came the labor problem. The manufacturer of the seventies and eighties was probably no harder in pushing wages down as low as possible, making labor take its share promptly of losses in a poor market, and exacting long hours of work, than the employer of a past generation had been. But then there had been the land to act as a safety valve for the enter-

prising, and there had been few laborers in a trade. Now with labor clustered in large cities, with the golden promise of the boundless continent already passing, above all with thousands of German and Scandinavian skilled workingmen, suspicious, restless, filled with the ideals of La Salle and Karl Marx, conflict developed when wages were lowered by stress of hard times.

The change was first apparent in Chicago when the boom years of the Civil War period slumped into the panic of 1873 and men were out of work. The red flag appeared on the streets; in January of 1874 the workingmen's party of Illinois was launched; its demands at first were studiously moderate in hope of gaining the support of the farmers—the eight hour day, no child labor, no prison labor save on public works, compulsory education, state management of means of transportation and saving banks, direct taxes, recall of public officers; but behind those demands was the extreme ideal of the communist state.

The continual reduction of wages all through the period of 1873-77 only added fuel to the fire already kindled. In 1877 a strike of Michigan Central switchmen threatened to become a general strike. Nineteen men were killed in contests with the police. Defeat in the strike caused the radical element to turn again to political action; under the name of the socialist labor party they

elected two aldermen in Chicago in the spring of 1878, and four members of the General Assembly in the fall. The movement had long since developed its newspapers, most of them in German. In the movement the German element seemed generally to stand for direct action and communism in contrast to the more opportunist native Americans.

Meanwhile trade unionism proper had been developing; its first form was that of craft unions among the skilled foreign workers who led the way in this sort of organization. In 1877 Albert A. Parsons had been elected first president of the group of crafts unions that was finally to develop into the American Federation of Labor. By 1877 also the Knights of Labor had established their first locals in Illinois. A secret organization of the labor union type, its demands were the eight hour day, weekly pay, mechanics lien laws, arbitration, limitation of child labor and prison labor, equal pay for both sexes, and Greenbackism. Like most labor unions of the type it attracted the less skilled class of labor.

The trade union movement soon became involved with anarchism. New economic and political doctrines, far removed from those the pioneer state had learned at the feet of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, were being brought to her borders by her new citizens. In 1881 there

was organized the International Working People's Association, a branch of a London anarchist organization. It drew to itself more radical elements, aiming at the establishment by force of the ideal federation of producing communities. Its members used older associations for military drill as an army; its newspaper began to print articles on the use of dynamite. Chicago had the dubious honor of being the center of the radical labor movement in the United States.

Between 1879 and 1882 a series of strikes for higher wages had taken place. The packers had struck in 1880 for recognition of their organization, had been beaten and not taken back. In February, 1886, a struggle began at the McCormick works in Chicago over the principle of the closed shop. McCormick locked out his workmen. The press, formerly inclined to favor the eight hour day, now turned as the radical intent of the movement developed under the preaching of such papers as the *Arbeiter Zeitung*. There was a great riot at the McCormick plant May 3. Hatred of the police and the Pinkerton detectives was at fever heat; and the Haymarket riot was the result. A great meeting had been held in the old Haymarket of Chicago, where formerly the statue of a policeman, now in Union Park, commemorated the tragedy. A meeting addressed by Parsons and others was outwardly quiet. The

police attempted to disperse it and a bomb was thrown in their ranks causing heavy loss of life.

The horror of the community at the outrage condoned measures against the anarchist leaders that overstepped the bounds of Anglo Saxon liberty. For the eight men sentenced for the crime no direct connection with the throwing of the bomb or direct advice of its use could be established. All that could be proved was that their utterances were such as might be supposed to provoke violence. Parsons and three other men went to the gallows; three other men sentenced to imprisonment were pardoned by Governor Altgeld.

The labor problem nevertheless had passed the worst stage. The development of the nineties was twofold. In the one direction moved the advocates of political action, the adherents of the various labor and socialist parties, and such labor unions as the present Industrial Workers of the World; on the other hand the skilled crafts, affiliated through national trades unions with the American Federation of Labor, generally eschewed political action save to obtain the modification of laws and decisions calculated to prevent their use of the strike and the boycott to obtain shorter hours, higher wages, and better working conditions; avowedly their goal is now "more, more, more." However, the Chicago Federation of Labor has always tended to be somewhat more



radical than the national federation. Most of the demands that seemed extreme in the seventies and eighties have long since been adopted by the community by acquiescence or legislation.

The generation had its financial problem as well as its labor problem. The old state banking system, based on note issues secured by bonds, had passed away in the time of the Civil War. Its place had been taken partly by the new national banking system, partly by specially chartered banks and private banking corporations. The national system was under a certain degree of supervision, but not the state or private banks. Failures were numerous. Both national and state banks went down in the panic of 1873. Four years later a group of savings banks failed through incompetence or fraud. In 1887 the state finally adopted a general banking law, and forced the state banks in existence to accept its provisions; but a savings bank act passed in the same year was declared unconstitutional because it was not submitted to a vote of the people.

Among the poorer classes generally there was much distrust of banks, much belief that the issue of bank note currency was a profitable business that the government should take over itself by the issue of greenbacks. Accompanying the period of high prices there had been currency expansion by greenbacks in the days of the Civil War. Men



looked back to it with regret in the period of falling prices after 1873. They ascribed them to the contraction of the currency at the behest of Wall Street financiers and eastern creditors, undertaken that the government and their western debtors might be compelled to pay in dollars growing dearer and dearer in purchasing power; accordingly the debtors clamored for more money and cheaper money; the reversal of "the crime of '73" by which the silver dollar was alleged to have been demonetized; the issue of more greenbacks. Both demands appear in many reform and radical programs of the day.

Even more pressing than the problem of the banks and the currency was that of the railroads. The manufacturer who ordered his raw materials and delivered his products over them, the farmer who shipped his grain and hogs, the passenger who rode on them, the local tax payer whose county had subscribed to their bonds, each and all had grievances, and sought in one way or another to redress them.

Decade after decade had seen the railroad net woven closer across the state. From 1879 to 1884 it increased from 7578 to 8904 miles. By 1893 no land in the state was so much as twenty miles from a railroad; 85% of the land was within four miles of one. From the beginning the cooperation of local communities had been

enlisted in the building of railroads. This had been stimulated by the "tax grab" act of 1869, which allowed counties to deduct from the increased revenue from increased land values the interest due on their bond subsidies to the railroads that had presumably caused the increase. Probably \$20,000,000 in such bonds were out. Many of them had fallen into the hands of speculators rather than railroad builders, and when in 1874 the law was declared unconstitutional the burden of the bonds fell on the communities that issued them. The roads had some fine palace, dining, sleeping, and chair cars for display; but at the beginning of the period we are considering unvestibuled trains light enough in tonnage to run over unballasted mud road beds on iron T rails were the usual thing. The state railroad and warehouse commission established by the act of 1871—the first commission in the United States established to regulate warehouses, and the first after Massachusetts to regulate railroads—for years strove for ballasted tracks laid with steel rails, guarded crossings, flag men, gates, and vestibule trains. By 1885 in these respects it had gained its ends.

Otherwise it had been less successful. Rates for passengers and freight were what the traffic would bear and no less. To competing points freight receipts were pooled. In 1876 a pool

of lines to the East charged heavier rates from Chicago to the East than from Quincy, and Wisconsin and Minnesota points. The Wabash, Chicago and Alton, and Illinois Central had another pool for all competing points in the state. Other points paid enough to compensate. The railroads openly defied the rate regulations of the commission; carloads of farmers, paying only the legal fare, were cut out of trains and left on sidings; sometimes the farmers drew revolvers and knives on the train men. More than to passenger fares of course they objected to the charges for hauling produce. In 1873, C. B. Lawrence of the Illinois Supreme Court on a rate regulation case declared the act of 1871 contrary to the state Constitution. The legislature reenacted it; and the farmers arising in wrath deposed Judge Lawrence at the next election. The crux of the problem, however, was not the intrastate but the interstate rate; and that remained untouched till the federal interstate commerce act of 1887.

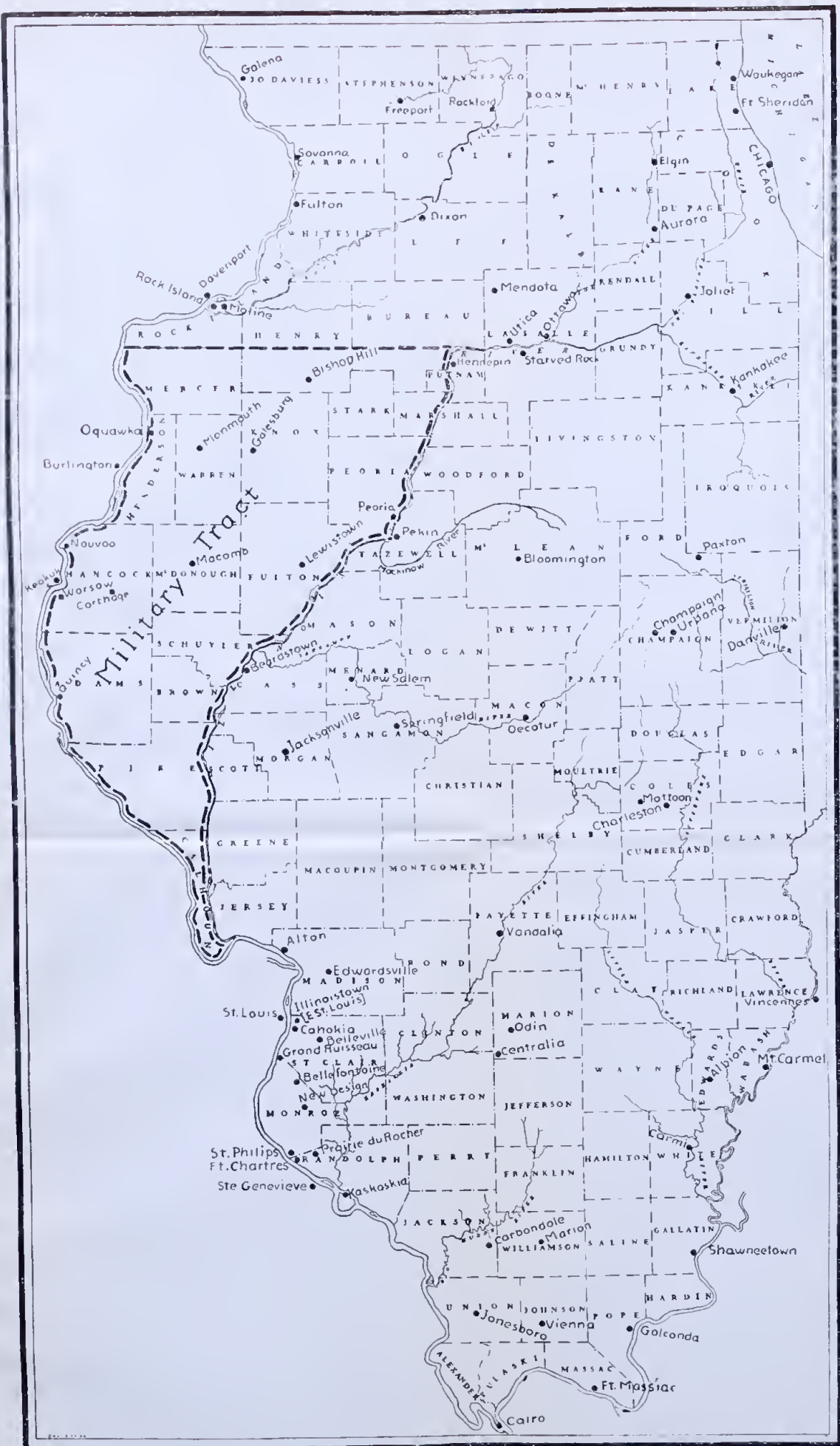
The public turned to water competition to regulate railroad rates, but had only partial success. Traffic on the Mississippi declined before railroad competition. In the seventies and eighties men looked to the Illinois and Michigan Canal and the Illinois River route as a possible means of keeping down railroad rates. To a certain extent it succeeded in doing so; but after

1880 the canal was run at a loss; the Illinois River traffic steadily declined. The Hennepin Canal undertaken in this period to connect the Illinois at Hennepin with the Mississippi River, when finally opened in 1907, was practically worthless. The Great Lakes offered more competition. True the railroads secured most of the flour shipments to the East but from 1870 to 1889 an increasing amount of wheat and corn was sent east from Chicago by boat. For many years the lumber schooner maintained her place on the lake; but as we shall see before the end of the period Chicago had yielded her supremacy as a market and shipping point for both grain and lumber.

The warehouse offered still another type of problem. The warehouse men charged excessive rates for warehousing and were suspected of fraud in grading and weighing grain. The constitutionality of the state statute and of the regulations of the Railroad and Warehouse Commission was finally upheld in *Munn vs. Illinois*, in the United States Supreme Court, 1876; the leader of the so-called Granger cases. The name may serve to introduce a study of farms and farmers in the state leading up to the state grange and cognate farmers' organizations.

The period has already been characterized as one in which the industry of the state was rising to the first rank in the Union and its agriculture





A SKETCH MAP OF ILLINOIS  
Showing Places Mentioned in Text



slipping back from it. In 1870 more than one-half the employed population of the state was engaged in agriculture, in 1890 less than one-third, and this even though the farm area and the amount of cereals raised actually increased. In absolute amount, however, Illinois was compelled to yield the palm to the Dakotas, Nebraska and Kansas; and her production declined after 1881. Illinois' farming, however, improved. The primitive farm of the backwoods, distanced long since by competition, was beginning to develop. The farmer was buying machinery; he was demanding opportunities to market his produce that would give him his fair share of the comforts of life. The reaper, the binder, the hay tedder, the grain drill were all increasing the production of Illinois farms, even though the proportion of labor was declining. Better brands of dairy cattle, of beef cattle, of hogs were being used; sheep had reached their maximum number in the state in 1865—3,000,000.

Tenant farming was on the increase, an ominous sign. In 1880, 31.4% of Illinois farms were operated by tenants, in 1890, 34%; the possession of 211,000 acres of such farms by a British subject, William Scully, who introduced Irish methods of absentee landlordism and rack renting was responsible for the law of 1887 against alien land ownership.



The dissatisfaction and unrest among farmers in the age of transition and change is illustrated by the formation of farmers' associations of one sort or another. Already the organization of the farmers of the state had been used by Jonathan B. Turner to secure the foundation of the agricultural colleges for their benefit under the Morrill act. In 1867 at Washington, D. C., the organization known as the Patrons of Husbandry was formed. Organized into state and local granges, with degrees for both men and women, it came to Illinois in 1868, and flourished between 1872 and 1874. One of its purposes was to buy agricultural machinery for members at a discount. Montgomery Ward and Company of Chicago, establishing a Grange supply house, was the first of the long line of mail order houses. The well-to-do elements of the rural community were inclined to look on the grangers with contempt; but the grangers persisted. Naturally the farmers in their war on railroads and warehouses upheld the hands of the state railroad and warehouse commission. In 1874 they defeated the judges who threw out the commission's suits; in that same year an antimonopolist movement begun among them under the leadership of Turner and John M. Palmer elected a fusion superintendent of public instruction and nine independents to the legislature.

This marked for a time the high water mark of farmer activity. For a time thereafter the farmers realigned themselves in republican, democratic and greenback camps; but they had found a weapon and could use it again. In 1890 the Farmers Mutual Benefit Association elected fifty farmer assemblymen, both republican and democratic. Operating within the old parties it could make its demands effective.

These were but a few of the greater problems of the period; at every point the amazing development and change of the new commonwealth presented its problems to be mastered. Ever since the forties the state's educational system had been broadening. To the little colleges of the pioneer period Northwestern University had been added in 1855, and the old University of Chicago in 1857. In the same years Jonathan B. Turner was gaining popular support for his ideal of an industrial university, where youth might secure technical and scientific training to turn to account in the development of agriculture and industry. The idea finally bore fruit in the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 which granted to each state lands in proportion to its representation in Congress for colleges of agriculture and the mechanic arts. The Illinois denominational colleges sought to divide the largess among themselves, but Turner won his fight for the endowment of a new

institution. The Illinois Industrial University chartered by the legislature in 1867 was located at Urbana, thanks to adroit political manipulation on the part of the local assemblyman. Before 1870 its first regent, John Milton Gregory, had laid the foundation not merely of a technical school, but of a college of liberal arts as well.

The Illinois Industrial University at first passed through troublous times. Its revenues were small; it was criticised keenly by the interests it was supposed to serve; it was almost overshadowed by some of the older denominational institutions such as Northwestern, Knox, and Illinois College. The change of name to the University of Illinois in 1885 seemed to help little. Not until the nineties did the series of state appropriations begin that has lifted the institution to the foremost rank of the western universities.

In primary and secondary school education progress from 1850 to 1893 was continuous. By the former year, men had come to regard as inadequate the old schools held a few weeks, taught by men fitted for nothing else, out of any and all books available, and enforcing their precepts with the rod. In the cities at least the little red school house was being replaced by the more modern school building and the haphazard teacher by the trained professional. School societies, school magazines appeared, pleading the cause of uni-

form and standardized education. The designating of the Secretary of State as Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1845 and the creation of an independent officer in 1854 had been earnestness that a state system would soon come. The first superintendent, Ninian W. Edwards, drew up a comprehensive free school bill providing for the support of schools by state wide taxation. It passed in 1855. The normal school appeared in 1857. By 1870 the first public high schools could stand comparison with the best private academies. Their opponents in vain raised the cry of extravagance and the education of a select few at public expense.

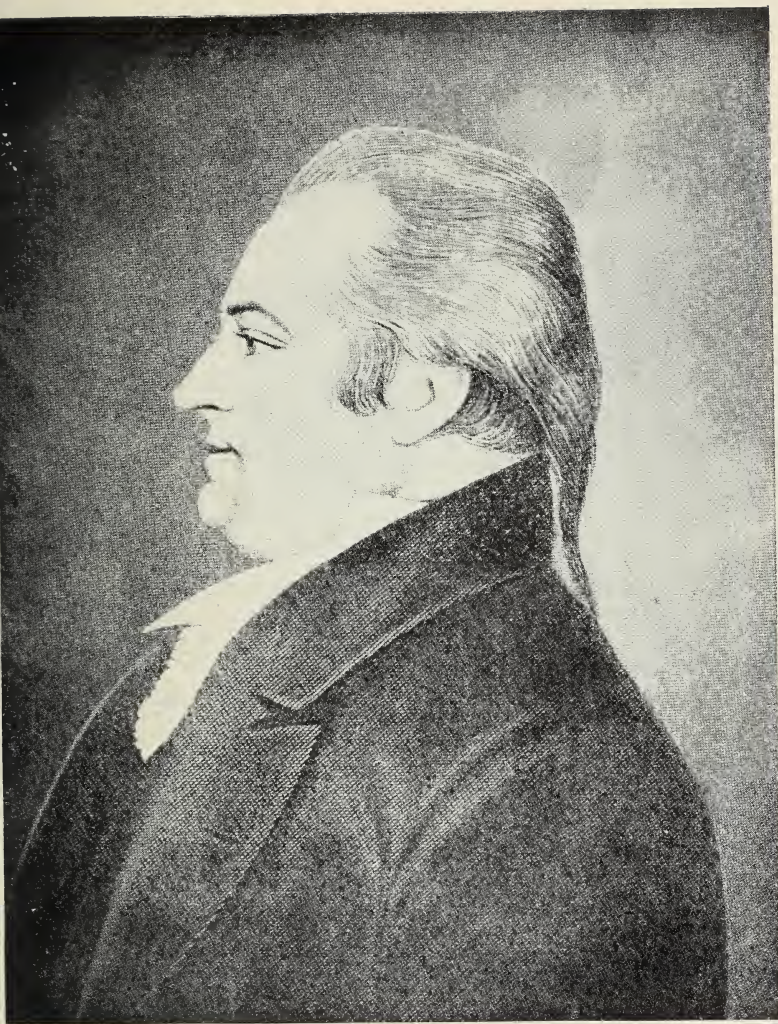
The school problems of the seventies and eighties revolved around the question of the parochial school. The convention of 1869-1870 had omitted from the new constitution provisions for the reading of the bible and religious instruction in the public schools of the state; it had expressly forbidden the deflection to parochial schools of a part of the school funds. This last, however, was urged as an act of justice to those who paid school tax but whose consciences compelled them to send their children to schools where religious instruction was given. The idea of the public non-religious school prevailed, however. In 1883 and 1887 were passed the state's first compulsory education laws.

In the seventies and eighties Chicago and to a lesser extent the rest of the state was developing new means of recreation and enjoyment. Since 1865 it had had intermittent Grand Opera; its musical organizations such as the Apollo Club, and its recital halls and theaters multiplied. There were more obvious kinds of amusement. In 1878 horse racing began on an organized scale. Base-ball was still older and was passing through phases more recently familiar. The *Chicago Tribune*, November 3, 1877, said:

The disclosures contained in our columns this morning, of the rascality practiced by prominent members of some of the leading base-ball nines of the country can be accepted as unfailing evidence that the game of base-ball which for nearly ten years has enjoyed a remarkable popularity has virtually collapsed, so far as the maintenance of paid professional clubs is concerned. The Louisville and St. Louis Clubs are presumably not the only ones which have been corrupted by the gamblers into machines for swindling, and now that investigations are the order of the day they should not stop until a general exposure is brought about. If the dead game is to be buried in disgrace let all the assassins be buried with it.

Yet four years later August 28, 1881, the *Tribune* had to admit that Chicago is the principal supporter of the ball game; the clubs from other places come here in order to share the receipts, or





*Thomas Edwards*  
(1775 - 1833)

[From original painting owned by Chicago Historical Society]





the "gate-money," and from their earnings here eke out the scant receipts at the other towns. It is not an unusual thing to have 4,000 to 6,000 idlers at a game in Chicago; the number has reached 8,000, and rarely even less than 2,000 or 3,000. At other places the number of visitors ranges from 300, to 1,000, the latter being a fair maximum outside of Chicago.

The period of the seventies was ushered in by the Great Fire of 1871. The Chicago of that year was a timber built city, dried by the hot prairie winds of summer to a tinder box. October 9, 1871, a fire starting on the old west side carried by a high wind laid all the central portion of the city in ashes, killing 250 people, leaving 92,000 homeless, destroying \$187,929,000 property. Other cities looked forward to profiting. Quincy, under the call of Orville H. Browning, held a meeting to consider attracting part of Chicago's trade. But the city was rebuilt more solidly than before; the indomitable spirit of the men of the day carried all before it. "I have seen men who have lost their millions" wrote an observer, "but not one who sat down and wept." In the same spirit with which Chicago met the disaster of 1871, the commonwealth of which she was the center, met the perplexing problems caused by the new growth of the generation; with courage and an ever increasing intelligence.

If the Great Fire ushered in the period with a challenge to Chicago's courage, the World's Fair of 1893 closed it with an appeal to her finer perceptions. For eight years Chicago organizations devoted themselves to the project of a Fair to celebrate the four-hundredth anniversary of the landing of Columbus. Congressional support had to be engaged and other cities aspiring to hold the Exposition had to be maneuvered out of the running. A city subscription of \$10,000,000 assured her triumph. The fair was postponed to 1893, and then opened, a series of dazzling white buildings with a few more somber and solid scattered amidst the lawns and lagoons of Jackson Park by the waters of the lake. In its scope, in the area it covered, in the volume of exhibits, in the number of visitors it set new standards. More important still in the achievement of beauty in its outward form, an achievement still to be sensed in the decaying classic loveliness of the old Field Museum in Jackson Park, it promised a new era for city, state and nation alike in which material accomplishment should be expressed in outward grace.

## CHAPTER XIV

### TWO DECADES OF PARTY POLITICS

THE politics of 1870-90 seem remote from the real questions of the period. While the state was struggling with a series of problems caused by its growth the state parties were contending on issues of the Civil War and reconstruction, appealing to old partisan loyalties, parading enthusiasm to certain striking personalities, and using the vital state issues only as stalking horses. Only occasionally does a man like Palmer appear, with an appreciation of the deeper questions of the time; and necessarily he walks athwart regular party lines in his course.

The republican party of 1870 was not by any means the republican party of 1854, of 1856, or even of 1860. Democratic converts like Logan had entered it to outdo in vehemence the founders and make them feel out of place. Because a man had the type of mind that sensed danger from an aggressive slave power in 1856, he was not necessarily disposed in 1870, not to let the beaten South escape until it had paid the uttermost farthing. Such men could see too many unclean spirits that had fattened off the blood of the men who

had given their lives to the Union, clustering around the party for protection. Tariff protected manufacturers, financial manipulators who had grown rich during the Civil War were shouting the most lustily for the ideals of 1860 although when those ideals had been at stake other men had struggled and sacrificed for them. The liberal republican movement represented a protest for cleaner politics and the freeing the party from the big business men and protectionists who dominated it.

The election of 1870 passed without much comment. The disaffected republicans supported the democrat, S. S. Hayes, for congressman at large against John L. Beveridge; but Beveridge won handily by 20,000. The senatorial election of 1870 resolved itself into a contest between two Civil War heroes, popular, lovable and beloved men both, Richard J. Oglesby and John A. Logan, in which Logan was successful. Logan, the "black eagle," had atoned for his earlier democracy and copperheadism by his gallantry in the war; he was the ideal of the old soldier. To be told that John A. Logan needed his vote would bring a negro or old soldier voter out under any circumstance. That Logan was accused of spoils politics, and was vehement rather than statesman-like made no difference to his admirers.

There were men in his party who saw him in

a different and less favorable light. "Logan," the *Chicago Tribune*, quoted January 22, 1879:

Is a sort of Republican Voorhees. A demagogue originally of the same breezy, primitive Western type, though by reason of being a Republican demagogue under the restraint of the somewhat more intelligent opinion of his party, in a section which it must be confessed is not distinguished among the nations of the earth by a high grade of popular intelligence, with the physical traits and bearing which romancers are fond of attributing to their heroes, the swarthy, long-haired, and black-eyed political General and martial politician—who still carries on the War against the Rebellion in full regimentals at the head of his corps in the politics of Illinois—impresses the popular imagination of the Suckers more as a fine martial figure sustaining intimate and patriotic relations with the American Eagle than by his intellectual qualities or his value as a political leader. He is a half-educated, distinguished-looking humbug, with a gift of meretricious glibness on the stump, whose smooth and sonorous inconsequences pass for eloquence and wisdom with the popular audiences. . . .

There was widespread dissatisfaction with the national administration under Grant, the gold ring, the whisky ring, the various other scandals developing, the appointments of members of Grant's family to office, the abrogation of the civil service principle. Even the *Chicago Tribune*

became independent. A general revolt against the Grant administration impended, led by John M. Palmer, Lyman Trumbull, John Wentworth, Jesse W. Fell, and Judge David Davis. Palmer had already crossed blades with Grant in behalf of the dignity of the state when the president at the time of the Chicago fire had sent troops to Chicago without their being requested by the governor. At the Cincinnati Liberal Republican convention Davis and Trumbull both claimed the support of the Illinois delegation. The delegation split its vote between them; then, because it hesitated too long in turning to Charles Francis Adams of Massachusetts, the nomination fell to Horace Greeley. There was little chance of carrying the republicans of the West, dissatisfied with republican high tariffs, for an ardent protectionist like Greeley. The democrats in Illinois as elsewhere endorsed the ticket in spite of Greeley's long whig and republican record; but without enthusiasm.

In the state race Oglesby and Beveridge ran on the republican ticket for Governor and Lieutenant Governor. To oppose Oglesby liberal republican and democratic conventions meeting in Springfield and working in harmony nominated Gustavus Koerner. This placated the Germans; but the farmers, the discontented element in which alone lay the chance of liberal republican success



did not expect more of their desired legislation from democrats than from republicans; and the convention platform evaded the tariff issue. Oglesby won on the state and Grant on the national ticket, Grant's vote running 241,936 to 184,884. The result showed the state was still republican, tariff and all.

Oglesby in 1873 accepted election to the senate, leaving Beveridge to fill out his term as governor; "the quiet-mannered and wonderfully astute gray-beard now rattling around in the Governor's chair," the *Cairo Bulletin* called him. In 1876, however, Beveridge lost the nomination for governor to Shelby M. Cullom. The democrats endorsed the Greenback candidates for governor and auditor, Lewis Steward and John Hise, and nominated their own men for other offices; Greenbackism was the thing they had to trust now to break the republican strength as they had trusted liberal republicanism four years before. The Greenback movement offered a strong appeal to the state. Farmers, vainly seeking loans, pressed to find interest to pay on mortgages, easily listened to charges that there was not enough money in the country. Wage earners, counting their few dollars pay were reminded of the flush days of the sixties when greenbacks flourished and apparently wages were high. So strong was the demand for inflation, that democrats began to have hope of



success, especially with an anti-temperance campaign to draw the German vote from the republicans.

In the end Cullom and Hayes carried the state by a narrow margin. Cullom had but 7,000 majority, not an eighth of what Grant had four years before. In the Illinois legislature the Greenback group held the balance of power. Palmer and Logan contested the senatorship; but eventually the democrats turned to David Davis, electing him with the help of the independents. Meanwhile Illinois, like the nation, during the contested election between Hayes and Tilden had reached a pitch of political excitement that almost threatened civil war. That the democrats acquiesced in the decisions of the electoral commission, in spite of the fact that those decisions are now questioned by impartial students, was a triumph for orderly government.

In the years that followed 1876 the democrats forgot their new found affection for the Greenback movement—the “rag baby” of republican orators. With the Greenbackers drifting off toward the Knights of Labor and more radical labor reform, the democrats were willing to make a place for both Greenback and anti-Greenback men in their ranks. Both parties were inclined to sneer at the demands of the labor enthusiasts for the eight hour day and the abolition of child

labor. And to satisfy the cry of the workingman and farmer for cheap money a new and more respectable inflationist scheme had arisen; the re-monetization of silver.

For sixty years before 1853 the United States had been trying to keep silver and gold on such a ratio to each other in the coinage that both would stay in circulation. First one and then the other felt the unfavorable ratios and dropped out. From 1853 the United States had tacitly dropped the attempt at bimetallism, the holding of silver equal with gold as the standard. In 1873 a coinage act had omitted the silver dollar from the list of coins to be struck—the famous “crime of 1873.” For a generation free silver orators expatiated on the plot of British capital to subject the United States to slavery to British gold, or told the man of religion that Congress had wickedly defied God by reducing from the coinage a metal mentioned in His holy word. The silver mine owner added his enthusiasm; and in the west at first practically all men, republican and democratic alike, favored the Bland-Allison silver measure of 1878. Not until the nineties did the western republicans develop a change of heart on the subject of free silver.

Meanwhile Logan, defying protests against boss rule was supreme in the republican party. In 1879 a republican legislature elected him sen-

ator over Oglesby who came up for reelection. Logan especially lent his influence to the movement to nominate Grant for a third term in 1880. In spite of republican protests at Logan's domination the Grant men controlled the state convention and instructed the delegation for him. In the Chicago republican convention, however, Garfield was unexpectedly put on as a compromise candidate, running against Weaver for the Greenbacks and Hancock for the democrats. Hancock's declaration that the tariff was a local issue took the heart out of the democrats who might still have capitalized the state's dislike of protection. Cullom, the republican nominee for reelection as governor, was easily successful over Lyman Trumbull, the democratic candidate—the Greenback candidate holding the balance between them. In 1882 Cullom in his turn left the Governor's chair to accept a senatorship, and his thirty years service in the senate began. The Lieutenant Governor John M. Hamilton took his place.

Eighteen eighty-four was a democratic year in the nation. In Illinois, Oglesby was nominated for governor over Hamilton to contest the election with the elder Carter Harrison, the famous mayor of Chicago. Both sides had now endorsed the demands of labor, the democrats declaring for the eight hour day and the right of labor to organize. Logan was endorsed by the state con-

vention for the Presidency, but ultimately had to accept the vice presidential nomination on the ticket with Blaine. The republicans, though successful in the state, lost the national election. The Illinois legislature was closely divided and one of the most thrilling political contests in the state's history began.

The senate of the general assembly that convened at Springfield in January 1885 consisted of twenty-six republicans and twenty-five democrats including one Greenbacker. The House contained seventy-six republicans and seventy-seven democrats including an "independent," E. M. Haines of Lake county. First came the difficulty of organization. Haines was chosen temporary speaker as a compliment. He then blandly with the help of his friend Sittig, a republican, attempted to retain the office on the ground that the constitution of the state knew but one speaker, the permanent one. After much disorder the democrats gave way and elected him speaker. Even more serious was the contest over the senatorship; for the sum of the members of the houses on joint ballot including one doubtful vote on each side was 102 democrats and 102 republicans. The republicans selected Logan as their candidate, agreeing to support him to the end. The democrats, divided between William R. Morrison and Carter Harrison, finally adopted

Morrison, and the long contest began. Perhaps either side, certainly the democrats, might time after time have secured the needed additional vote to elect a compromise candidate; but they held out. The session dragged on indefinitely; the people of the state became indignant at the farce of the seemingly interminable party struggle.

Twice during the earlier part of the session members had died. On both occasions the members had been replaced by others of similar politics; and on the death of Representative Shaw of the thirtieth senatorial district—the counties of Cass, Mason, Schuyler and Menard—it seemed certain that the same thing would happen, for the district was democratic by 1800 or 2000 majority. To a certain Henry Craske, however, occurred the idea of a “gumshoe” campaign to get the republican vote out without alarming the democrats till too late. Logan gave his consent though skeptical of success. The republicans put forward no candidate, but a secret campaign through the district warned the republican voters to turn out to the polls late on the day of the election. Two days before election, men posing as cattle buyers, etc., passed through the district distributing to the precincts republican ballots for William H. Weaver for assemblyman. The democrats were not alarmed till too late to get out their vote and Weaver won by a few hundred. He was im-



*John P. Altgeld*

(1847—1902)







mediately seated and Logan was elected to the senate.

The state election of 1888 resolved itself into a contest between "Private Joe" Fifer, the republican candidate, an old soldier who, in an age of political generals, enjoyed the distinction indicated by his nickname, and John M. Palmer. Palmer once more took a decidedly pro-labor point of view. He had the clear sightedness to lay a part of the trouble of 1886 in Chicago to the Pinkertons and the police. But Illinois was now a normally republican state and Fifer as well as Benjamin Harrison on the national ticket was duly elected; two years later, however, the fifty farmer members elected by the Farmers' Mutual Benefit Association held the balance of power in the house, and in a three-cornered battle for the senatorship between Palmer and republican and farmer candidates, Palmer was elected March 12, 1891.

In 1892 Fifer was again the logical candidate of the republicans; his democratic opponent was the remarkable John P. Altgeld, German by birth, a rich man by his own exertions, social and political reformer, labor sympathizer, and radical by nature, whose motives were pronounced by his best friends a strange medley of high ideals and personal prejudices, a man in whom intellect and emotion were strangely mixed. As Palmer had

done in 1888, Altgeld strove to keep out of Illinois gubernatorial elections the old republican issues of Civil War and Reconstruction, and to pin the canvas to the questions of legislative and social reform that directly concerned the state. He adopted the public and parochial school issue as his main platform; both the state and national democratic candidates were successful. With Altgeld's election an era of social reform legislation began.

## CHAPTER XV

### RECENT POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT

**I**N DEALING with recent history such as that since 1893 in which persons now living were actively engaged, the historian's method must be modified. He can no longer study frankly the interplay of personality with events and no longer show how the weakness and foibles of the individual weave into the web of history. He must limit himself to bare statements of fact regarding elections and political contests of individuals and the growth of institutions.

With 1893 opened the first democratic state administration since the Civil War under Governor Altgeld. A tremendous dissatisfaction with the republican party had carried into power a political idealist. But the reaction from discontent came; men grew tired of the high hopes of the idealist. These hopes hardly comported with defalcations that took place under him, and in 1896 the democrats went out of office to stay out for four terms. Bryan then in the first flush of youthful enthusiasm was preaching the cause of the masses against the classes on the old issue of cheap money, this time in the form of free silver.

In 1896 and again in 1900 on this issue he lost the state to McKinley. In those years respectively John A. Tanner and Richard Yates, son of the war governor, were elected governors over Altgeld and Samuel Alschuler, respectively. The republican vote mounted, Alschuler, the most successful of the democrats falling 60,000 behind his opponent. In 1904 the republican majority for president and governor rose to 300,000. It was the "Roosevelt" year when Charles S. Deneen, nominated for governor after a hard convention struggle, ran against Lawrence B. Stringer. In 1908, however, with Deneen running against Adlai E. Stevenson former vice president with Cleveland, this majority was cut to 23,000; but Taft beat Bryan in the state by 179,000.

In these years the political composition of the Congressional delegation had fluctuated. For the congress elected in 1890 under dissatisfaction with the McKinley tariff it numbered six republicans and fourteen democrats. In 1892 the democrats had to be content with one-half the delegation. In 1896 they could elect but four out of twenty-two. In 1894 they had not a single member. After the Roosevelt landslide of 1904 they had but one.

The general assemblies showed smaller fluctuations; the principle of minority representation assured the minority party a respectable strength

in the House, however weak they might be in the Senate.

At this time we are too close to it to analyze the motives and intentions of the progressive movement of 1912. Liberals of all shades from Theodore Roosevelt to Miss Jane Addams met in harmony, ignoring the fundamental difference of their views of the universe to push a program of liberal reform, political, legal, and social. The term social justice was vague and meant many different things; but the enthusiasm of a crusade for righteousness swept through the country and Illinois as well. Point had been given to it in Illinois by the unseating of William Lorimer in 1912 by the United States Senate on the ground that corrupt interests had brought about his election through bribery of the state legislature in 1909.

It was at Chicago in the republican national convention that the progressive movement began. The contest between Taft and Roosevelt for the control of the convention and the nomination had led to a series of contesting delegations; alleging votes were unjustly taken from Roosevelt by the national committee, the revolting Roosevelt forces refused to vote on the nomination, assailing the presiding officer with jeers when their delegations were called. After the convention had renominated Taft and adjourned, the Roosevelt forces met at

Orchestra Hall to launch the movement that became the progressive party and put Roosevelt in the field as a third candidate against Taft and Wilson. For a time there was doubt as to whether a candidate for governor should be run against Deneen, who had supported Roosevelt up to the point of revolting from the party; the decision was made, however, to run Frank Funk. With the state republican party divided on both governor and president, the election of Woodrow Wilson, liberal enough to hold the democrats in line, and of Judge Edward F. Dunne as governor was assured. In the general assembly elected in 1912 the democrats had ninety-six votes in joint ballot, the republicans seventy-seven and the progressives twenty-eight. A coalition of democrats and republicans elected L. Y. Sherman, republican, and James Hamilton Lewis, democrat, United States senators.

In Illinois the progressive movement sank away little more slowly than it arose. The liberalism of Wilson's administration carried away some of it, the rest under the issues of the war was reabsorbed in the republican party by the election of 1916. In that year the normal republican majority in Illinois reasserted itself and Frank O. Lowden was elected governor over Dunne, the state electoral vote going to Hughes as against Wilson. In 1920 the republicans swept the state



for both governor and president, in spite of the fact that the nomination of their candidate, Len Small, had come about after a bitter contest with the faction headed by Lowden; the two groups warred on each other savagely during the whole course of Small's administration.

The Spanish American War fell in the period we are considering. Save for the wave of patriotic enthusiasm it called out it did not affect Illinois deeply. Nine regiments of infantry, one of cavalry, and a battery of artillery were the state's quota. Of these the First Infantry served in the Santiago campaign, the Third and the battery in Porto Rico, the Sixth in Cuba and Porto Rico, and the Eighth and Ninth in Cuba.

From the point of view of government the history of the period is better studied with regard to certain movements for change in its organization. Chief among these is the demand for constitutional amendment or revision. The Constitution of 1870 ably framed for the Illinois of its day, an agricultural community with a large city in it, is quite inadequate for a commonwealth as much interested in manufacture and commerce as agriculture and containing a world metropolis. The framers of the constitution satisfied to have established the work of their hands upon them had made amendment difficult; an amendment must be submitted by two-thirds of each house of

the general assembly, and ratified by a majority of those voting at the next election; amendments could be submitted to but one article at a time; and no two for the same article within four years. Before the state ballot act of 1891 amendment was easier; because in the ballots furnished by political parties before that year, amendments were usually submitted as affirmative propositions, and all votes not cast specifically against them were counted for them; but after that year unless a voter on the official ballot expressed his opinion specifically for the proposition his vote was counted against it. Lack of interest on the part of voters thenceforth would insure the defeat of an amendment.

After 1891, too, it became increasingly difficult to secure a two-thirds majority of the legislature for any proposed amendment. Sectional interests, Chicago versus down state, financial interests, privileged interests generally were likely to be engaged pro or con on any given amendment; and it was not difficult in a legislature with houses chosen on fundamentally different principles to secure a dissenting one-third in one or the other house. Worse than this, rival amendments contended at session after session to be the one the assembly was permitted to submit; and the groups supporting them worked each for its own and against the others. The so-called "gateway"

amendment to amend the amending clause offered session after session was always sidetracked in the assembly or defeated at the polls. Three times in thirty years attempts were made to call a constitutional convention to frame a new constitution; in 1893, and in 1901, resolutions were voted down in the Assembly. In 1917, however, a convention resolution passed the assembly and eighteen months later was adopted by the voters. The convention met in 1920, carried on its work intermittently for two years and finally submitted a complete constitution to the people. Much could be said against it on various points and strong groups and classes of the electorate were mustered against it; it was overwhelmingly defeated.

The defects in the constitution of 1870 as it stands are numerous. Many technical objections can be alleged to the judicial clauses. Its revenue article providing for a uniform tax on all property, fair enough in the agricultural commonwealth of 1870, now allows vast amounts of intangible personal property to escape. Its restrictions on municipalities and their debts prevents a thoroughgoing development of Chicago. The system of minority representation permits each voter to cast three votes for members of the House of Representatives of the General Assembly for one, two, or three candidates. Accord-

ingly, under any circumstances one-third the voters may insure the election of one assemblyman. In practice a much smaller fraction may often do it. The system is one of vicious minority overrepresentation. The constitution leaves no opening for improvements on republican government such as the initiative and referendum. It relies for democracy on letting the people elect to one office after another purely administrative in function, and sets voters every four years to pass on the qualifications of a secretary of state with whose office they have come in contact merely to apply for automobile licenses and an auditor of public accounts with whose office they have probably not come in contact at all.

Meanwhile for forty-seven years after the constitution of 1870 was adopted the administrative system of the state grew more and more cumbersome. The constitution provided a simple list of administrative officers, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, auditor of public accounts, treasurer, superintendent of public instruction, attorney general. But as one private activity after another required regulation, one profession or occupation after another had to be licensed, one special industry or public utility after another supervised, special officers, boards, etc., paid and unpaid, were heaped up till the number reached over a hundred. Every regulating stat-

ute created its board to administer it.

The situation came to a head in the report of the Efficiency and Economy Commission of 1913-15. In large measure based on this report was the Consolidation Act of 1917. This act leaving untouched the older constitutional offices—secretary of state, auditor, superintendent of public instruction, attorney general—till a constitutional convention could deal with them, set beside them new departments, the heads to hold office for four years by appointment of governor and senate. Of these departments that of finance was entrusted with a state budget; agriculture, labor, mines and minerals, trade and commerce, public health, had the functions implied by their names. Registration and education took over the license examinations for physicians, barbers, etc., and a general supervision of the normal schools, etc. Public works had control not merely of building, but state printing, etc. Public welfare took over the control of all the public charitable and penal institutions of the state. Under these departments were grouped the few surviving separate boards in more or less dependent relations. The act was a long step toward a modern scientific state government, but unfortunately the constitutional convention failed to adjust it to the older offices, leaving them side by side with it as before.

Before the passage of the act, even, the state had made long advances in dealing with the problem of administration. Since 1869 there had been a state board of charities with purely supervisory control over the charitable institutions of the state. In 1909 a state board of administration replaced all the local boards of the various asylums, etc. A state charities commission with powers of visitation was established beside it. In 1917 the penal institutions of the state were added to the charitable and the whole placed under the control of the department of public welfare.

Illinois has finally attained to a good state civil service organization. The history of civil service reform in Illinois begins with the act of 1895 allowing the adoption of the system in cities. It was so adopted by Chicago, Evanston, Springfield, and Waukegan. Naturally the system was most important with respect to Chicago. There it has been in a precarious situation, continually invalidated by the use of sixty day permits to keep in office persons without due qualifications. In 1901 the Cook County civil service commission was convicted of malfeasance in office. In 1911 the Cook County civil service system was extended to all county employees; but the act was declared unconstitutional as unduly passed. State civil service has come more slowly, but surely. In 1905



it was applied to all charitable institutions. In 1910 the question of a statewide civil service was carried in a popular public policy vote; and in 1911 an act was passed. It secured their positions to all incumbents, but provided for competitive examinations which in the case of certain scientific posts are "unassembled," consisting of questions as to training and experience. For the first six years of the act employees could be removed only by charges and trial. After 1917 the appointing authority could remove, subject to appeal that the removal was due to religious, racial, or political reasons.

The suffrage of the state has been revolutionized in the last thirty years. Before the Australian Ballot Act of 1891, parties supplied their own ballots and made nominations independent of any legal control. With 1891 the state began to recognize in law the party system that had existed since 1834 in practice. An official ballot was provided on which candidates were to be listed under their party labels; and a system of nominating conventions was prescribed.

The defects of the nominating convention and the possibility of packing it caused an agitation for direct primaries to choose party tickets. Primary acts passed in 1905, 1906, 1908, and 1919 were declared unconstitutional by the supreme court. One of 1910 stood the test; but it cannot

be applied to a judicial nomination which, with the drawing up of party platforms is still performed by nominating conventions. In 1901 provision was made for the submission to the voters, on petition of ten per cent of the voters of the state or twenty-five per cent of those of any district, questions of public policy not more than three in number on a ballot; but there is no compulsion on the legislature to pass measures corresponding in case of an affirmative vote.

The period saw the establishment of woman suffrage. In 1891 women were allowed to vote in school elections. In 1909 they were permitted to be candidates for all school offices from which they were not barred by constitutional provision. In 1913 they were allowed to vote for all political offices not constitutional in their origin, the most important being presidential elector. Since the ratification of the 19th amendment to the federal constitution they have been permitted to vote for all offices.

One effect of their vote was to extend the prohibition area over the state. In 1907 a law permitting votes on local option in villages, towns, etc., was passed; dry areas spread steadily, increasing greatly in the election of 1913 with the women voting for the first time. Since then the Volstead act and a state enforcement act almost as rigid have made the sale or manufacture for

consumption of alcoholic liquors generally unlawful. Wet and dry has been one of the most savage dividing issues in Illinois politics. For years the state anti-saloon league campaigned for the defeat of wet and the election of dry candidates; and in the state general assembly the designation of wet and dry even now cuts across parties and factions alike.

In some respects the most remarkable part of Illinois legislative record during the period is in labor legislation. The beginnings of it go farther back. The first regulation of mines and mining, early recognized as a dangerous occupation, was by act of 1872. In 1883 a board of examiners of mining and state mining inspectors was established. In 1899, 1910, and 1913 the law was further expanded and codified. In 1891 the state's first child labor law was passed, setting the age limit at thirteen; it remained a dead letter, but by act of 1893 a department of factories and workshops was created to enforce it; the age limit was raised to fourteen, with supervision of children fourteen to sixteen. In 1903 the act was made still more stringent, limiting employment during school sessions and in certain places and occupations. In 1904 child labor in Illinois mines came to an end.

An eight hour clause for women in the act of 1893 was declared unconstitutional, but ten hour

laws for women were passed in 1909 and 1911. A law providing all possible safeguards against occupational diseases passed in 1911, and workmen's compensation laws in 1911, 1913 and 1917. Even earlier, in 1899 free state employment agencies had been created. Generally Illinois stands high among the states in its labor legislation.

The thirty years since 1893 have seen great masses of legislation passed compared with the meager output of 1872-93. This has mostly been done in the comparatively narrow biennial legislative sessions between the first week in January and the last week in June. Necessarily the influence of individual members on legislation has declined, as that of committees and of the steering organizations of the house and senate has increased. Occasionally in the rush at the last minute, laws have been passed inconsistent and ill advised; and excessive appropriations have been made. But generally considered the results have not been as bad as might have been expected.

Two outside influences have had increasing weight in legislation. The supreme court, as will appear by the foregoing narrative, has exercised freely its power of declaring laws unconstitutional. Between 1870 and 1913 it decided against the constitutionality of laws in 257 out of 789 cases. The governor, too, since 1884 possessed of the

power to veto separate items of appropriation, has exercised an increasing influence. By reason of the fact that so much legislation is passed so late in the session as to make it impossible to pass it over his veto, his power of veto has become almost absolute. That, coupled with his powers of appointment gives him a strong influence over the assembly whenever he cares to use it. At the close of the first hundred years of its statehood the Illinois General Assembly was in a state of relative subordination to governor and supreme court almost the reverse of its commanding position in 1818.

## CHAPTER XVI

### THE WORLD WAR

THERE can be no question but that the deciding factor of the World War of 1914-18 was the weight in soldiers, munitions, money, food-stuffs, and above all in intelligence and moral enthusiasm contributed by the United States in 1917-18. In this contribution the state of Illinois was of supreme importance, far greater than her relative mass in the nation would indicate. Situated as she was at the heart of the Mississippi Valley, almost the first in the Union in agriculture, third in manufacturing, with one of the largest foreign and especially German populations, everything depended on her attitude. Were she to "fight backwardly" as Kentucky and Maryland had done in 1861-65, were her allegiance divided, the resources of the nation would be disastrously crippled at the start. Possibly a part of those resources would have to be diverted to hold her neuter in the struggle. When she outdid herself in contribution victory was assured. The way of her contribution and the measure of it are here to be told.

The moral issues involved in the World War



cannot be adequately appraised till future historians have duly weighed and valued the causes that in August, 1914, sent three hundred and fifty million Europeans at each other's throats and eventually drew into the whirlpool wellnigh all the peoples of the earth save Spanish South America and a few of the lesser states of Europe. But the people of Illinois and the Union from the first passed moral judgments as to the origin of the conflict; they were far from unanimous in them. The mass of the people of Illinois condemned Germany from the beginning for the violation of Belgium, for the lurid tales of atrocities inflicted deliberately on civilian populations, and for the schemes of world conquest ascribed to the German militarists.

The Americans of German extraction on the other hand insisted bitterly that the Fatherland was striving desperately to free itself from the insidious encircling web of diplomacy woven by Isvolsky, Poincaré, and Sir Edward Grey; they decried the tales of atrocity, and maintained the invasion of Belgium to have been a commonplace of European military theory for twenty years. The difference passed beyond argument to emotion. On the one hand, were those of German blood, on the other those whose racial antecedents led to England, Italy, Russia and the subject peoples of the dual monarchy.

The weapons of war employed by Germany only deepened the hostility of her American opponents. The introduction of poison gas and of submarine attacks on merchant vessels seemed brutal, lawless, and violent compared with Great Britain's aggressions on neutral commerce, and her blockade of neutral continental ports. The sinking of the *Lusitania* in 1915 and the loss of American citizens on board swept the country to the verge of war. The President attempted by diplomatic means to obtain reparation and security for the future. A pledge was finally obtained in 1916. But the conviction that all government in Germany was subordinated to a ruthless, headstrong, military group gained headway when the limitations on submarine warfare were denounced by Germany in January, 1917. In spite of the fact that in 1916 Woodrow Wilson had been re-elected on the slogan "He kept us out of war," the President could no longer hold back the tide that was sweeping us in.

The greater part of the American people would doubtless have been content to air their moral condemnation of Germany without actual resort to war. Most intelligent people regarded the declaration of war of April 6, 1917, as merely a gesture of support for the winning side, till the allied missions revealed the fact that the submarine blockade was fearfully effective, that

Russia, beaten again and again in the field, had at last disintegrated in a radical revolution, and that the whole strength of the United States was required to avert a crushing defeat.

The necessities now seemed clear. There could be no question that the triumph of Germany would leave a militarist clique in charge of the destinies of Europe. In Germany there seemed to be no hands able to hold them back if they won. Wilson therefore sounded in his war message and in other state papers the call to a crusade for democracy against militarism, the war to end war. Assured that Armageddon was at hand the American people rallied at his call for the conflict.

There was a minority of opposition stronger in Illinois than elsewhere to this program. Five of the fifty congressmen who voted against war were from Illinois. The vast mass of Germans by birth and descent acquiesced loyally in the war; but a small minority took up the trade of the spy and sower of sedition. Many genuine pacifists like Jane Addams, and Jenkin Lloyd Jones, himself a veteran of the Civil War, believed the war unnecessary. The socialists opposed it, as did the Industrial Workers of the World, the radical labor group whose national headquarters were in Chicago. The then mayor of Chicago was reluctant, doubtful alike of the draft and of

the despatch of American troops to Europe. And the meeting of the People's Council in Chicago in September, 1917, to insist on a statement of terms of peace, dissolved only under a threat of military action by the governor.

These elements of dissent were silenced sooner or later. The American Protective League, a volunteer secret service organization, originated in Chicago and at one time had thirteen thousand operatives in the city who ran down one hundred thousand cases of suspects for disloyalty, and draft evasion. German aliens were registered February 4 and June 17, 1918, and were barred from certain zones save with special permit. A widespread refusal to register for the draft at Rockford was dealt with by prosecutions. The Department of Justice from July to September, 1917, checked the activities of the socialists, suppressing their newspaper; the headquarters of the I. W. W. were raided in September, 1917; and in 1918 numerous convictions of radical leaders were obtained on indictments for disloyalty. In some of these proceedings there is no question that judicial agencies overstepped the bounds of free speech and freedom of the press; but in modern war all are combatants; and among civilians and soldiers alike uniformity of thought on the war becomes a military necessity. Practical unanimity of expression in the form of support of the war was

one way or another attained.

A very important part in the organization of Illinois for war was played by Governor Frank O. Lowden. When early in February diplomatic relations with Germany were broken, he appeared before the General Assembly to urge united support of the President. In large measure he was responsible for the creation of the State Council of Defense by act approved May 2, 1917. The Council so created consisted of fifteen members, representing capital, labor and all the large interests of the state and itself organized all the state's resources for victory. Under it functioned the whole improvised civilian war organization of the state. It had to complain that federal agencies instead of using the organization sought to supersede it; but that was remedied by executive order in August, 1918.

It would require a volume to cover adequately the manifold activities in which the State Council of Defense engaged or the organizations created by it or affiliated to it to carry on its work. It cooperated with the Red Cross, the American Protective League, the Federal Food and Fuel Administration, the National Security League, a "preparedness" organization antedating the war, and the Four Minute Men, the last being an organization of four minute speakers at theaters, churches, and lodges, who week by week explained

the government policy and invoked support of enlistment, liberty loans, Red Cross, and other war activities. The State Council of Defense created county auxiliary committees to function as its executives throughout the counties. Affiliated with it was a woman's committee whose activities may be measured by its sub-committees of allied relief, Americanization, child welfare, training women for special work, food conservation, publicity, speakers, war information, women and children in industry. September 2-15, 1918, the State Council of Defense held a great war government exposition at Chicago, the proceeds of which went into the pockets of the federal department of publicity.

Among the first problems that confronted it were those of food and fuel. War industries were sure to demand vast amounts of coal; the railroads crippled in equipment and burdened with extraordinary demands for transportation, foresaw difficulty in the winter. Coal prices went up. The operators, anxious to keep them up, repudiated an agreement to arbitrate them, hoping for higher prices from the federal fuel administration, and the governor considered taking over the mines in the state as a war measure. A conference of councils of defence of the 13 northwestern states interested in the western coal fields was held to concert action, abandoning it only on learning



that a federal fuel administration was installed. Thenceforth in Illinois as elsewhere coal of various grades was rationed at fixed prices according to the relative importance of the industries that used it. Even thus there were fuel shortage and suffering, lightless nights and heatless days during the winter of 1918.

Food was an even more serious problem. Food production in the allied and neutral countries of Europe had been falling short. Crops of 1917 were below average, and the United States was confronted with the problem of feeding Europe at the same time that it drew great armies from the harvest fields. The problem presented itself from two different angles, conservation and economy in the use of foods, especially wheat, sugar, beef and pork, and the production of more.

To economize the use of food a direct campaign was launched at the housewife, teaching her the necessity of avoiding waste and using substitutes for the crucial foods. That such an appeal would have the success that it did would have seemed almost unbelievable before 1917. In no European country would it have succeeded. Eight hundred fifty thousand pledge cards were signed in Illinois guaranteeing cooperation with the Federal Food Administration. Wheatless days and meatless days were thus enforced in restaurant and home alike. The Federal Food

Administration in Illinois were further engaged in rationing to dealers wheat flours and sugar, and proceeding against violators of the regulations in this class.

More important than this was the positive campaign for the increase of food production. Even with the lure of high prices, the mighty shift by which Illinois in a year changed her main crop from corn to wheat is an amazing example of the triumph of organization and propaganda. The wheat crop of Illinois increased 100% from 1917 to 1918, while its corn crop fell off from 418,000,000 to 344,350,000 bushels. The steering of a course between producer and consumer in regulating prices was not always easy, and the producers complained of a disposition to recede from prices fairly fixed; but even at that the results in increase of food production would before the war have seemed impossible.

This was done, too, in the face of the withdrawal of labor for the armies. The draft regulations, it is true, granted deferred classification to those engaged in agriculture; but they were not always enforced, and at the best subtracted much labor. Some of this was accounted for by putting city boys to work on the farms, as a patriotic duty; a woman's land movement was little more than a gesture, and the greatest part of the result was ascribable to the more efficient

manipulation of experienced labor already available.

The State Council of Defense was responsible in March, 1918, for initiating a movement to direct to western factories a part of the vast flood of government war contracts. Already before 1917 allied nations had placed contracts in Illinois for wheeled transportation, shell cases, shell forgings, cartridges, etc. Now a flood of government orders of all imaginable sorts taxed factories to their capacities. In some cases the government itself provided firms with additional factory and housing space to deal with its orders. Statistics are fragmentary, but of orders exceeding \$100,000 in amount \$890,000,000 was placed in Illinois by the war department exclusive of \$26,000,000 spent in camp construction. The navy alone expended \$20,000,000 on additional construction in the state.

An important phase of the state's war activity was the floating in it of the five Liberty Loans. The organizations for these were developed on the basis of the two Federal Reserve districts, the seventh, or Chicago, and the eighth, or St. Louis, within which the state lies. Within each of these the ramifications reached down to the county organizations, which attempted to equal or exceed set quotas based on population, wealth, banking assets, and other criteria. Starting with

a rudimentary organization for the first loan, the organization became more and more elaborate for successive loans as the quotas increased. It became advisable to get as many purchasers as possible in order to encourage thrift and to prevent demands for luxuries from diverting industry from the filling of government war contracts.

To this end campaigns were launched with posters, competitions, speaking, every imaginable advertising device to force the duty of purchasing home on the individual. In many places individual quotas were set and the individual expected to subscribe accordingly. The banks made arrangements to carry purchasers on partial payments. The result is told by the figures. In the northern part of the state, included in the seventh district, the sales run from \$195,685,200 in the first loan subscribed by 280,000 persons, to \$250,000,000 on the second and 661,104 subscribers, \$247,662,250 on the third with 1,417,131 subscribers, \$424,112,000 on the fourth from 1,866,064 subscribers, and \$332,323,200 on the fifth from 1,130,854 subscribers. Not all these sums were actually allotted.

The eighth district with the southern counties of the state was more slowly stirred, due perhaps to a less efficient organization. It fell short in its quota on the first, but subscribed to the remaining four a total of some \$130,000,000. The

number of subscribers increased from 54,125 in the second to 190,430 in the third, 258,282 on the fourth, and 73,768 on the fifth.

As a further incentive to economy, War Savings Stamps were put on sale in December, 1917; by appeals at restaurants, stores, etc., to buy stamps, winged by all sorts of poster advertising, clubs, and opportunities to sign pledges of support to Pershing, \$73,000,000 were sold in the state.

To the colorful civilian Illinois of the war days, noisy with bands, eloquent with four-minute and noon-day speakers urging this and that cause or conservation, glowing with posters adjuring to every patriotic duty from enlistment to buying War Savings Stamps, the organization charged with the welfare of our own fighting forces and those of the allies added their appeal. The Red Cross in membership campaigns of December, 1917, and 1918, gained paid annual memberships of 1,298,111, and 1,194,472 respectively. In drives for funds in June of 1917 and May of 1918 it acquired \$5,638,074 and \$10,524,422. Its functions in Illinois included relief to soldiers' families, instruction clinics, preparation of dressings, garments for refugees, and so on, and the enrollment of trained nurses.

The Young Men's Christian Association took over light-heartedly the maintenance of canteen

service and recreation and amusement at the Great Lakes Naval Station, Camp Grant, Fort Sheridan, etc. The Knights of Columbus, the Jewish Welfare Board, and the Salvation Army carried on similar duties on a smaller scale. The Young Woman's Christian Association maintained Hostess Houses at the camps and looked after women engaged in war work. The American Library Association collected and bought books and provided libraries for the books in this country and in France. These organizations combined in the latter part of 1918 to raise money in a United War Work campaign, to be divided pro rata among their organizations. The quota of Illinois was \$12,719,700, collection on it \$13,250,364, and this in spite of the fact that the armistice shut off enthusiasm. Besides these, dozens of organizations devoted to relief to one or another of the allies functioned in smaller groups, collecting money and needed supplies.

The Illinois citizen at the climax of the war in November, 1918, had been made a peculiarly useful cog in a war machine. Elaborate organizations and methods of propaganda existed to tell him what was expected of him in subscriptions, work, etc., to spur him on to accomplish them, and to key up his loyalty to the government. That a reaction came from the mood of exaltation so produced was not surprising.



A consideration of the military activity of Illinois has been left to the last. In view of the numerous slogans such as "Food will win the war," the reminder of Theodore Roosevelt that while such things might help to win the war it would be won as wars in the past, by fighting men, was timely. The military participation of the state is hard to define in terms of battles. Reacting from the civil war methods of regiments organized from neighborhoods, the war department used a replacement system that shuffled men from localities and states. Even National Guard companies raised in a single town in 1916-1917, by March, 1919, could show representatives of forty different states. Comparatively few units that saw actual fighting can be classified as predominantly of Illinois men.

The selective service system was the method by which most Illinois citizens entered the service. In the three respective registrations of June 5, 1917 (men 21-30), June 5 and August 4, 1918 (men 21 since the first registration), and September 12, 1918 (men 18-45), Illinois registered 653,587, 54,375, and 866,915, respectively. The determining of eligibility from the first was placed in the hands of local boards, of which there were 227. Eight district boards in the state acted upon appeals for exemption or deferred classification. After December 15, 1917, a system of classifica-

tion was adopted as to eligibility to service. The Illinois figures are class I, 397,171, classes II-IV, 534,465, V, 252,033, not classified (men 37-45), 391,208. There were numerous delinquents in registration as might have been expected in a floating population: 40,000 were rounded up in Chicago in July, 1918. The total number inducted by draft during the war was 193,338.

The draft, while the largest, was not the most effective source of man power. In the year ending June 30, 1917, there were 30,000 applicants for enlistment in the army, of whom 16,000 were accepted. The precise number of Illinoisans who enlisted first and last is not yet known. The Navy, in 1917-18, enlisted 9,600 out of 31,000 applicants. Between August 5-11, 1917, the whole national guard of the state was federalized with a strength of 590 officers and 18,029 enlisted men. Its place was taken by a supplementary state militia. The naval militia of the state, 40 officers and 600 men, were inducted into the naval service. There were in addition, 25,638 enlistments in the United States Naval Reserve Force.

The actual service and participation of Illinois men in the fighting is hard to estimate. Of the many Illinois men to go to France but a minority were in organizations in which Illinois men predominated. The honors and service of some who

served and merited best are merged in units not classified as belonging to Illinois. Of the National Army Divisions in which Illinois men were an important factor, the 84th, trained at Camp Taylor, Kentucky, was mainly used for replacements on its arrival in France, September-October, 1918. The 86th Division, trained at Camp Grant, after losing thousands in replacements, arrived in France, September 21-October 9. All the units except the Field Artillery Brigade were broken up for replacements, and that was under training at the armistice. The 88th Division, trained at Camp Dodge, Iowa, contained several units in which Illinois men predominated. It arrived in France August-September, 1918, and was used on the front line in the Alsace sector.

The 13th regiment of Railroad Engineers, enlisted in May, 1917, sailed for France in July and was used in the operation of railroads behind the lines. The 370th Infantry, the old 8th Infantry of the Illinois National Guard, served with French units in the Oise-Aisne offensive of 1918.

The state's most distinctive unit was the 33rd Division, made up of its National Guard units excepting the 8th Infantry, 1st Field Artillery, and the bands of the 5th and 7th Infantry Regiments. It was sent to Camp Logan, Texas, for training. There it suffered delays and setbacks due to shortage of equipment and delay in send-

ing supplemental drafts of national army men to fill its ranks. It sailed for France May 8 to June 4 and on arrival except for the artillery was assigned to the British for training. While with them detachments of two of its regiments were embodied in Australian companies in a minor operation at Hamel July 4, that resulted in a gain of more than a mile. The 131st Regiment assisted in the British offensive at Chipilly August 9, 1918; members of the division were decorated by the king of Great Britain for their service. The division was then transferred to the Meuse sector where it took part in the offensive of September 26, clearing the left bank of the Meuse. It was next used in a flanking attack across the Meuse and saw some hard fighting in the struggle to clear the heights to the east of the river. Finally it was relieved and transferred to the Troyon sector, where it was advancing at the Armistice.

The 33rd enjoys the distinction of being the only American division to serve under British, French, and American command. It suffered 8,279 casualties of whom 785 were killed in action. It captured 3,987 prisoners, was fourth among the divisions of the American Expeditionary Forces in prisoners taken, ninth in the number of kilometers advanced, twelfth in number of casualties, and twentieth in number killed in

action. After the Armistice it was held in Luxemburg until its return to the United States in May, 1919.

The Illinois unit with the most brilliant military record is the 149th Field Artillery, of the 42nd or Rainbow Division, so called because it was made of select units from the National Guard of twenty-six states. The Illinois First Field Artillery was mustered into service July 20, 1917, and after a brief training at Fort Sheridan was sent to France arriving October 31, 1917. After a long period of training it occupied the Lunéville sector, February 21—March 23, 1918, the Bacarat sector, March 31—June 21, the Esperance Souain sector, July 4-14. It took part in what is officially known as the Champagne—Marne Defensive, July 15-17, helping to smother Ludendorff's last offensive. It served brilliantly in the Aisne-Marne Offensive that swept the Germans out of the Chateau Thierry pocket, July 25—August 6, 1918. It served in the St. Mihiel Offensive, the first undertaken by the American army, September 12-16, and is credited with occupation of the Essey Pannes sector, September 17-30. It took part twice in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, October 7—November 1, and November 5—November 9. It formed a part of the Army of Occupation, being stationed on the left bank of the Rhine, returned to the United

States and was mustered out in May, 1919.

The recognition by the state of the services of its soldiers was generously given. Special arrangements for the welcome of the returning units were made, most of the 33rd Division units being greeted by the Governor on their arrival in New York and parading in Chicago before discharge at Camp Grant. Special civil service privileges were awarded all veterans of the war; distinctive medals were authorized. A history of the 33rd Division was published by the state and distributed to members of the division. In 1921 the General Assembly passed an act for a service compensation to soldiers and sailors with a maximum of \$300. The necessary bond issue was approved by the voters in 1922, declared constitutional by the supreme court of the state, and the payment of claims begun in July, 1923.

Certain military and naval posts in the state were important factors in training the enlarged war forces of the nation. Great Lakes Naval Training Station established on the lake shore thirty miles north of Chicago had been founded in 1904 for training naval recruits. It was enlarged repeatedly after 1917 to take care of the war enlistments and drafts. During the war it sent out 71,440 trained men. Its schools trained seamen, petty, warrant, and commissioned officers,



actively cooperating with training ships and schools at Chicago.

Fort Sheridan, since 1893 a regular army post, was used in 1917 for two successive three months officers training camps. The first camp included men from Wisconsin, Michigan, and Illinois, and the second those from other states of the farther West as well. Four thousand officers were commissioned in the first camp and 3,000 in the second. In 1918 Fort Sheridan was turned into a rehabilitation hospital, but has recently been returned to a regular army post. Two flying fields were established in Illinois in June and July of 1917, Scott Field near Belleville and Chanute Field at Rantoul, the latter cooperating with the School for Military Aeronautics at Urbana from which 2,691 men were graduated.

A post for the training of a National Army Division was built at Rockford June-December, 1917, and named Camp Grant. It was the place of training of the 86th or Black Hawk Division, but was also used as depot and remount station. In 1921 it was abandoned as a post.

In this connection should be mentioned the units of the Student Army Training Corps established in colleges and technical schools of the state to take advantage of their facilities for training officers, noncommissioned officers and specialists. 'All told there were thirty such units

in Illinois, the most important being those at the University of Illinois with 3,000, Northwestern with 1,839, and the University of Chicago with 1,500. This was only a part of the service rendered by the specialists of those universities in all capacities from increasing the yield of the state's corn fields to advising on the terms of the peace.

If the citizens of Illinois showed themselves appreciative of the service of their men in the war, their reaction to the war as a whole was more mixed. The last act of the war, the Treaty of Versailles, came to the people tired with the strain of moral exaltation and self-sacrifice, and weary of being urged on grounds of patriotism to submit to every piece of bureaucratic inefficiency that emanated from Washington. The treaty and the league of nations seemed to commit the United States to expend her blood and treasure in European quarrels, yet unforeseen, and at the bidding of others. Half sensed was the looming danger of militarism in France and Japan only less dangerous than that crushed in Germany. To reason was added the instinctive disgust with the party that while in control of the war government had had to serve as a hard taskmaster. And in the election of 1920 the governed took their revenge on their government. By a vote of 1,420,480 to 534,395 Illinois repudiated in a measure the policies, but still more the govern-

ment of Wilson. The new policy of the United States was to be felt out by opportunists and not imagined by a theorist.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE ILLINOIS OF THE PRESENT

**I**N ITS externals the life of the commonwealth of Illinois in the generation that followed 1893 underwent a far reaching change. Forces already at work, industrialism, the coming of foreign elements, transmuted the nature of the state. Chicago from a great city became a world metropolis, and as its life grew more complex its problems multiplied. A series of inventions, the telephone, the electric car and the interurban railroad, the automobile, and especially the cheap car, the moving picture, the radio changed the means of amusement and social habits of every class of the community above abject poverty. The ultimate results of these things still lie in the future but their present influence is apparent on every hand.

The transformation of the face of things has come most rapidly, of course, in the larger cities and especially Chicago. Since 1893 a lake shore of dumps and mud flats has developed the splendid sweep of Michigan Avenue, Grant Park and the Lake Shore Drive. Vast as are the areas of open prairie long since covered with apartments,

the apartment building is continually pushing out not only the little houses, frame or brick, but the stately mansions with their lawns and their stables. Elements with lower standards of life have invaded one after another the older fashionable sections of the city; Ashland Boulevard, Jackson Boulevard, Washington Boulevard, Drexel Boulevard, South Michigan Avenue, the old north side. Only on Lake Shore Drive has the aristocratic mansion held its own. The city whose transportation needs were accounted for by jingling horse cars, the less sedate cable, and the reckless single-truck trolley car, now finds electric car and elevated railroad and omnibusses, even when supplemented by autos, numbered by the hundred thousand insufficient for her needs, and demands subways. While the lumber schooner has vanished from the river and only occasionally does a freighter "bridge" traffic, great freight yards and belt systems scores of miles out in the country handle her ever increasing freights. Gas light and flickering arc lamps have yielded to the incandescent lamp; gas is now a fuel rather than an illuminant, and electricity is everywhere and used for every household need. The wooden block pavement has changed first to macadam and then to asphalt; cement has replaced the wooden sidewalk.

The changes in the smaller towns are of the

same nature, but have come more slowly. And the electric light, the telephone, and the radio are finding their way to farm houses in the wake of the gasoline engine. The hard road and the auto are just beginning the revolution of rural life; the effect they will have on the small village or cross roads store, once the limit to which the family nag could haul a buggy through a road of Illinois mud, remains to be seen.

Yet the externals that have been changing so rapidly should not blind us to the factors beneath the surface that change more slowly. The essentials of the attitude of man toward man, economic relations, political methods and ideas have altered little in rural Illinois. A traveler on the high road is as likely to be proffered a lift from a Ford as ever he was from a buggy or wagon. Municipal life in Chicago, it is true, has led to greater sophistication. Yet even there the ideas that guide the more solid citizen in his relation to the state and to his neighbor are essentially the heritage of the older commonwealth. With these things in view we can approach the actual changes that have come.

The population of Illinois in the period increased to six and a half millions, increasing roughly 850,000 from 1910 and 1,660,000 from 1890. Its population is a little less than one-sixteenth that of the United States. It has been



growing in the last decade more slowly than either Michigan or Ohio, and in density of population is now exceeded by eight states, Ohio, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. The increase has come in the urban population. The population classed as rural in 1920, 2,082,127 was some eighty thousand less than ten years before. In the same ten years the population of Chicago had grown about 520,000 to 2,701,705. The population of the so-called metropolitan area of Chicago had increased from 2,455,942 to 3,178,924. The increase in this area accounts therefore for all save about a hundred thousand of the increase in Illinois population. Population is increasing also in the other Illinois cities and in the mining districts.

The rural counties of the state are declining in population. In 1920 fifty-six counties showed a decline, in 1910, fifty, in 1900, but six. In 1920 but nine of the counties showing a decrease had towns of 2,500 or over, in 1910, but six. Meanwhile the development of the smaller towns is assuming importance. In 1920 Illinois had seventeen towns of 25,000 or over as against seven in 1900; twenty-seven towns of 10,000 to 25,000 as against ten in 1900; forty-seven towns of 5,000 to 10,000 as against twelve in 1900; eighty towns of 2,500 to 5,000 as against thirty-one in 1900,

or sixty places above 2,500 in 1900 and 171 in 1920.

Of the foreign elements now in the population the most important is the German with about one-sixth the total, or 205,491 (251,948 if Austria proper is added); next in order come Poles (162,405), Russians (117,899), Swedes (105,579), and Italians (94,407). Others above 50,000 in order are Irish, Bohemians, English. Two-thirds of the whole foreign element is in Chicago. The elements with strongest representation down state are the English, German, Italian, and Swedish. The problems that develop out of the foreign element and the urban population generally will have to be dealt with later.

The question of Illinois agriculture is a complicated one. The balance of interest in the state is shifting to manufacturing. Thus the value set on all farm property in the state including land in 1920 was \$6,666,767,235, about a billion dollars more than the value of all manufactured products in the state in 1919. If the investment in agricultural land be deducted, the value of farm property in the state is but \$1,416,472,483. Yet Illinois under the stimulus of the war had increased its crops amazingly. From 1909 to 1919 the harvest of corn had fallen off 2,000,000 acres and that of wheat had increased as much. In 1920 it had on its farms 1,296,852 horses,

168,274 mules, 1,283,178 beef cattle, 1,505,060 dairy cattle, 637,685 sheep, 4,639,182 swine. This may serve to outline roughly the character of Illinois farming—wheat growing, corn growing and stock feeding, dairying, hog raising. In 1920 and 1910 it was exceeded only by Iowa and Texas in the value of the live stock on its farms, only by the same states in 1919 in the value of its crops, where it ranked first in the union ten years before. Illinois agriculture has gained absolutely, has fallen relatively behind two other states, and relatively far behind manufacturing at home.

Yet this is only a mass consideration. More important than absolute product from the social point of view is the way the land is farmed and held and the prosperity of those who farm it. Much has been written about the increase of tenant farming in Illinois, and the growth of the class of retired farmers in the little towns. The per cent of farms held by tenants has increased from thirty-four per cent in 1890 to forty-two and seven-tenths per cent in 1920, but the rate of increase has been steadily less; in the last ten years but one and three-tenths per cent. Meanwhile the number of farms is declining, from 251,872 in 1910 to 237,181 in 1920. The acreage of land in farms is declining also—eighty-nine and one-tenth per cent of the state's area in

1920, ninety and seven-tenths per cent in 1910. These figures, however, have fluctuated for the last fifty years in such a way that no lesson is to be drawn from them. More significant is the fact that while both the bonanza wheat or cattle ranch and the small farm holdings are declining in numbers, the farms of 100 to 499 acres in size are increasing in number.

Illinois agriculture would then seem at present to be tending to a status in which farming is done neither by intensive "spade husbandry" or by large-scale managed enterprises—but by the direction of one man, the owner or tenant supervising a small group of labor with which he is in close and immediate touch; economically this is probably preferable to the small holding; socially it is far preferable to the great ranch in developing a rural citizenry. Tenant farming generally, unless the tenant has the prospect of ownership, seems from the angle of efficient farming, from the angle of the immediate social and economic welfare of the tenant or the ultimate welfare of the owner, undesirable. That its increase has slackened seems likely. Tenancy has increased fastest in the cereal growing parts of the state and not on the diversified farm.

In the state at large prosperity in the nineties has revolutionized the agricultural regions; the cabin and the wretched pioneer farm house have

been replaced by neat frame structures; the telephone has linked rural communities together and given lonely housewives the feeling of nearness of neighborly assistance and gossip. The Ford and the hard road and the interurban have helped to unite the farm house with the town; and improved agricultural machinery has revolutionized farming and allowed the steady release of rural population to the large cities.

Manufacturing in Illinois has grown past all telling in the last generation. The number of persons employed has grown from 561,044 in 1909 to 804,805 in 1919. Some 160 industries in the state had products of over \$3,000,000 in value beginning with slaughtering and packing, foundry and machine shop products, men's clothing, iron and steel, agricultural implements, railroad cars, electrical machinery, flour, printing and publishing, car repairs. Of the manufactures of the state 67.4% in 1919 were in Chicago, 11% in other cities above 25,000, 5.9% in cities of 10,000 to 25,000. If similar figures were available for the so-called Chicago metropolitan area it would show even more strikingly how manufacture centers in Chicago.

The description of manufacture must be left to the reader's imagination to dress in their true life the facts concealed in the dry government statistical formula. The outpour of products of

almost all imaginable things; the ceaseless play of inventions and of new methods of manufacture, the devising of new goods; the grouping into manufacturing districts of hundreds of thousands of wage earners, the mingling of thousands of diverse sexes, ages, races, moral and intellectual habits in great factories; the even closer influence and intercourse possible in smaller ones—here you have forces that by intermarriages, by interchange of ideas and standards can profoundly influence the future of the commonwealth on its intellectual and social side. Unless the employment of women and the young is closely watched, the physical effects may be altogether bad. State factory inspections, welfare work by the state, by the charitable organizations, by enterprises themselves, all show recognition of the importance of a solution of the problem in the interests of all.

Immediately with a view to dealing with working conditions and wages have come organized labor and trade unions. The centrifugal forces of labor organization in Illinois have been less violent than elsewhere of late years. There have been great strikes it is true: in 1894 a railroad strike in Chicago led President Cleveland in defiance of Governor Altgeld to send federal troops; the strike was led by Eugene V. Debs who in a resulting term in Federal prison turned socialist. Street car strikes, packers' strikes,



above all building trades strikes have come with threatened disorder in their train. True in the conservative trades organization the American Federation of Labor, the Chicago Federation of Labor has long been regarded as comparatively radical in tone, but syndicalism, or the control of industry by the workers brought about by violence and revolution, and the Industrial Workers of the World, with its methods of sabotage have had comparatively little weight. Corruption there undoubtedly has been in trades unionism in Illinois as in many other organizations. Trade union officials have maintained their position in their unions by violence and have used their positions to extort bribes from employers or have entered into corrupt understandings with them. There is no doubt that in insisting on increased wages the American Federation trades unions insist also on lessened production; there is no doubt that the grading down of standards and rates of production have taken away from the skilled workman the incentive to surpass the unskilled; there is no doubt that by limitation of union membership and apprenticeship, unions are tending to become monopolies. Yet with all the drag the unions have put on production, there is no question that they have raised to a comfortable living wage vast masses previously on the edge of poverty.

This has been done somewhat at the expense of unskilled labor, somewhat at the expense of the profits of capital but most at the expense of the unorganized middle class. Whether it is possible in the long run for these things to continue; whether the trades unions will not have to revise their attitude toward individual initiative in production if the United States is to continue to sell in the world markets is a question that the future can answer; but with all the violence, extortion, and inefficiency that have arisen in its wake in terms of social welfare the balance is decidedly in favor of trade unionism. It has postponed the sharp development of self conscious economic classes politically organized in the state; and that for the solution of Illinois' problem of unity is itself an advantage.

Consolidation has come in industry; sometimes it has reversed itself. The International Harvester Company, formed in 1902, represents a merger of the interests in Chicago's oldest line of manufacturing. The steel and iron consolidations of 1899-1902 have been permanent but not all embracing; the Pullman Company under various changes of name has moved toward control of its industry; but George Pullman's experimental model town of Pullman stands today a dreary red brick monument to the taste in architecture of the eighties. The packing merger brought

about in 1903 was dissolved in 1912; but consolidation has gradually continued since. In certain lines Chicago has to admit the growth of rivals; her packing industry has not grown as fast as it might have but for Kansas City and Omaha; Peoria has become a distributing center for agricultural machinery; and much grain that formerly was warehoused at Chicago now is shipped through to the coast.

Commensurate with the increase in both manufacturing and agriculture has come increase in commerce, finance and exchange mechanisms. The financing of business and agricultural enterprises has multiplied banks, national and state and private, until the state act of 1919 put the private banks out of business. It has multiplied still more the whole business mechanism, jobbing, wholesaling, commission handling, advertising. Chicago originated the mail order business and from the catalogues of its houses, bulky as city directories, pickled pork and phonographs, ammunition and cosmetics, watches and farm machinery, are sold from end to end of the nation. The office buildings of the Chicago loop are the testimony to commercial development. Figures and statistics of this development are hard to find; it is too evanescent to yield to the statistical test. Whether the tendency is a healthy one or not may well be questioned. Great numbers of per-

sons employing themselves as middle men exact middle men's toll of the product of industry before it passes to the consumer; and the waste of the system may easily overcome its economies.

The period, especially the last ten years of it saw the rounding out of the state's banking system. The banks organized under the National Banking Act of 1863 had furnished an element of stability. The state banks surviving the Banking Act of 1851 were supplemented by another group created under the State Act of 1887 providing for supervision of state banks by the auditor of public accounts. Under the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 Northern Illinois was included in the Seventh Federal Reserve District and Southern Illinois in the Eighth. The private banks that had flourished beside the national and state banks were ended by Acts of 1917 and 1919 which required all such banks to take out state charters or go out of business. So little was known of these banks that their number, something under 600 in 1915, was matter of guess work. There had been frequent failures among them. In 1920 the 484 Illinois National Banks had aggregate capital of \$92,561,000 and surplus of \$64,020,000. The 1,018 state banks had an aggregate capital of \$116,879,205. The combined resources of national and state banks reached the huge sum of \$3,500,000,000.

The transportation system of the state centers more and more on the railroad. The Illinois and Michigan Canal fell into disuse. The Hennepin Canal connecting the Illinois and the Mississippi opened in 1907 was never used. The Chicago Drainage Canal opened in 1900 was used but occasionally and for barge traffic. In spite of this the deep waterway idea persisted. In 1908 a bond issue to carry the canal to Utica was authorized; nothing was done. In 1915 an eight foot channel canal was projected in an act of the legislature; it has yet to be built. Lake traffic has fallen off rapidly. The port of Chicago has become inaccessible for the largest freight steamers. Fifty-five per cent of grain and flour moved east by boat in 1894, twenty per cent in 1915. Iron ore is the most important commodity of lake traffic now. The varied traffic of the Ohio and Mississippi as a result of railroad rate discrimination is the shadow of its former importance.

The railroad expanded to its full use in the period and saw the beginning of its decline. Its competition and discriminating rates had driven traffic off the rivers. Railroads owned lines of lake steamers till the Interstate Commerce Commission compelled their sale. Improving their facilities, adding to their equipment, extending their lines, the railroads had reached the limit of their powers by 1900. Then hostile legislation

began to have its effect. There was rigorous regulation of rates and passes by the Interstate Commerce Commission, and the imposition of a two cent a mile fare by Illinois in 1907. It was in chastened mood with old equipment and deteriorated road beds that they approached the war in 1917. At the end of it, relieved by the Interstate Commerce Commission of the two cent fare, charging high rates for freight and passengers alike, they stood ready for the future; what it holds cannot be told.

There is no doubt, however, that competition is falling on them savagely from several directions. They had met occasional competition in short hauls of freight and passengers from the interurbans that sprang up in the last twenty years. These had increased in mileage, single systems reaching to 350 miles; but both interurban and railroad are being superseded on this sort of business by the hard road and the automobile. How far truck fleets will cut into short haul freight in this section can hardly be told till the state hard roads are in working order.

The movement to pull Illinois out of the mud is hardly of age. The legislatures of the formative period of the state had sought to make roads by legislative fiat. For two generations the legislature had tinkered the general road law apparently in search of the magic word that would turn



rich prairie mud into stone and gravel. Agitation for hard roads at a commensurate outlay began about the year 1896. The farmers for years were skeptical, fearing lest they pay the cost for the city man's pleasure ways. In 1905 a state highway commission was authorized, and it organized in 1906. Next year counties were authorized to put out bond issues to build hard roads. In 1914 Cook and Vermilion counties took advantage of it. In 1913 the Tice road law appropriated \$1,300,000 for roads. A congressional subvention of 1916 amounted to \$3,000,000. In 1918 a road bond issue of \$60,000,000 was authorized. Under it roads are everywhere reaching completion at present. A new bond issue of \$100,000,000 was authorized by the legislature of 1923. It has yet to be passed on by the electorate.

Education in Illinois has changed very rapidly in the cities, less rapidly in the country. Thirty years ago in either one the subjects taught were much the same; the three R's, geography, history, grammar. The city school has long since added dozens of additional graces—music; sciences; it has sought from the normal schools teachers with new theories as to the methods of teaching.

The city high schools have developed, till in the subjects they attempt, the equipment with

which they attempt them, and the community life they seek to foster, they rival the colleges of former generations. Some of them are essentially free technical schools or junior colleges. Meanwhile, over the face of the country have arisen hundreds of township high schools, bringing the aspiration for high school education to thousands upon thousands of students who formerly never dared to hope for it. The burden of primary and secondary school education grows heavier and heavier, till men are found to exclaim that the burden of universal education is too heavy for the state to bear. That the state shows any sign of withdrawing from the ideal set high in her first basic law the Northwest Ordinance, is not apparent. Education may become more efficient; there is certainly no prospect of its being restricted.

As feeders of teachers to the secondary schools of the state, new normal schools have developed. To the original one at Normal, dating from 1857, and the southern at Carbondale in 1869, have been lately added three more at Charleston, DeKalb and Macomb. Technical schools have been founded, Armour Institute in 1893, Lewis Institute in 1896, Bradley Polytechnic in 1897.

Above all, the generation has seen the founding of one great university in the state and the expansion of two colleges to universities. Chi-



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NORTH CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS, URBANA, ILL.



cago, which first opened its doors in 1892 under the leadership of William Rainey Harper, set as its ideal the union of collegiate life with graduate instruction then to be found in but one or two other institutions of the country; since its founding, graduate schools have grown up in the United States by the dozen; but Chicago in spite of the donations it has drawn from Chicago citizens is to be ranked as essentially a national institution rather than a municipal or a state university.

The career of the University of Illinois has been different. While its work in department after department has set standards of scholarship and research for the United States and Europe, it has always to remember that it is essentially the servant of the state of Illinois. In many ways it has an old established record of service. For over fifty years on its experimental plots a difference of a foot in the growth of corn has preached to the farmer the value of fertilization and crop rotation; in every branch of agriculture, in ceramics, in mining, in the various branches of engineering, in chemistry, its experimental stations have stood ready to guide the industries of the state and teach them scientific methods. Its undergraduate and graduate schools have trained and sent forth public servants, engineers, farmers, teachers, doctors by the tens of thousands.

Northwestern University, though it has its graduate school, and affiliated colleges of law, medicine, dentistry, commerce, and journalism, is still essentially a great undergraduate institution offering general training in the arts and sciences. The colleges of the state older, many of them, than its three universities have advanced more slowly and steadily. The social training afforded by the small colleges in close contact of teacher and pupil has its recognized value; and Knox, Illinois, Rockford, Millikin, to mention only a few of many institutions have been furnishing it with thorough instruction.

Other institutions of general culture that seek to hold it at high levels must be considered. In addition to the libraries of the universities of the state, and the Chicago Public Library, Chicago possesses two admirable scholars' libraries, the John Crerar, specializing in the sciences, and the Newberry, with its works in the arts, literature and history, collected in Europe thirty-five years ago and long since irreplaceable. In 1917 the two libraries together with the University of Chicago offered to scholars in Chicago a million and a half of books.

The Field Columbian Museum, housed for twenty-five years in one of the loveliest buildings of the World's Fair in Jackson Park, was moved to a new building on the lake front, where



it houses impressive scientific collections in paleontology, ethnology, and allied sciences. The Art Institute based in 1879 on the old Academy of Fine Arts of Chicago has housed in its building in Grant Park a collection steadily increasing in size and excellence. Especially impressive are its collections of Inness, of the late French schools, and of the primitives. Its art school is one of the oldest and largest in the United States. The Chicago Historical Society founded in 1857 has replaced the priceless collection it lost in the fire of 1871 with one equally priceless.

The symphony orchestra begun by Theodore Thomas in 1869 has become long since one of the musical institutions of the United States; Chicago Grand Opera has had a meteoric if irregular career; musical organizations such as the Apollo Club chorus have sprung up. Chicago theaters have increased in number, even if they have tended more and more to fall into a subordinate role to New York as the dramatic center of the country. In outlining these developments especial attention has been paid to Chicago; but at Peoria, at Springfield, at a dozen Illinois cities similar, if less striking, developments could be noted; municipal galleries of art, municipal choirs, municipal libraries.

Yet significant as is all this the critic may say that Illinois has been content to absorb with her

wealth the art of past ages and to hoard it rather than to appreciate it or to use it as a starting point of aspiration for something better. Her attitude has not been perhaps that of that hard headed Roman general, beau ideal of Philistinism in all ages, who in removing the artistic spoils of the golden age of Greece to Rome specified with the contractors that pieces lost should be replaced by others of equal value; but it has been conformable.

Perhaps in poetry Illinois has come closest to striking an original note. At Springfield Nicholas Vachel Lindsay writes songs for democracy that democracy obstinately refuses to sing; Edgar Lee Masters once of Lewistown, carefully searches out and records the decadent in the Illinois generation that followed the pioneers; like the unhistorical minded in all generations he innocently contrasts with the sordidness of army life in the Spanish-American war the idealism of the revolutionary soldier and the frontiersman. Carl Sandburg in patched and striped verse dissects Chicago and its life for the delight of the radical.

Yet as far as wide popular appeal goes, these poets are all exotic; the means of culture already enumerated are equally exotic. The culture they exhale is rising more and more above the head even of the average undergraduate. Between

the heights of the state's borrowed culture and the tastes of its masses there is a great gulf; what is the reason?

As a matter of fact a culture arising from the tastes of the masses in Illinois as elsewhere is rapidly levelling all classes to a plane, low as compared with that of the "high brow" but still to be termed culture. The life of the people of Chicago, of the smaller cities, even of the small towns, has strangely humanized in the last thirty years. Where children formerly sat disconsolately on iron benches in parks bristling with "keep off the grass" signs, or on granite sea walls overlooking the lake, there now stretch miles of lawns free to all, and miles of bathing beaches where babies are taught by their mothers to swim almost as soon as to walk. Playgrounds have sprung up by the hundreds and parks have multiplied; not only Chicago, but Springfield, Alton, Peoria, Quincy, have their park systems on a generous scale. Golf links and tennis courts are everywhere to be used by anyone with energy to seek them out. In imitation of the country clubs of the millionaire, country clubs within the reach of moderate incomes multiply by dozens around Chicago, and appear in smaller cities; and above all the new roads stretch as invitingly away before the second hand Ford car as before the Rolls Royce. Everywhere the tourist will

find camp grounds to learn the lesson of mutual consideration in keeping them sanitary. The out of doors no longer belongs to the rich only. And in the motor and its cult they have a community of interest with the poor.

They are gaining a similar unity of interest more and more in their reading and dramatic entertainments. Whereas the magazines of a generation ago are barely holding their own, story magazines by the hundred have sprung up beside them usually offering the crudest of mental stimulus. The "movies" offer fundamentally the same sort of entertainment, the same acting, the same action, the same story, the same moral outlook, the same hero and heroine to the dime of the poor child and the dollar of the well-to-do. The amusements of the vast masses of Illinois citizens, therefore, are more and more offering a common basis of unity. Class warfare between representatives of labor and capital is less likely so long as they have the same intellectual standards. Community of amusements is the single common factor that unites all racial stocks within the state. The narrowness, the intolerance, the self satisfaction with its cultural standards of the middle western village and city have been set forth in masterly literary caricature. But Sinclair Lewis will not laugh Illinois standards of amusements down as Cervantes laughed away

Spanish chivalry. Inasmuch as the enjoyment of these media of expression is becoming common to vast masses of population, it is possible that they may become the outlet for the artistic impulses of a future generation. There is more hope in them than in the borrowings of exotic cultures of former ages, for they represent an innate and not an acquired taste, and are capable of growth.

Perhaps they may be a means to an end. The world in some twenty thousand years of its artistic history has seen few periods of real original expression; the cave paintings of the Cro-Magnon man, the art of ancient Egypt, and Assyria, the art of the ancient Greece, the art of the Gothic Cathedral. For the development of a new cultural expression Illinois and the America of the twentieth century may be ready.





## APPENDIX



# PRESIDENT 1824

## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTOR

### ELECTION NOVEMBER 1, 1824

#### FIRST DISTRICT

COUNTY	TOTAL	William Harrison		James Turney		John Todd		Jonathan Berry		John W. Scott		Scattered	
		Adams		"Jackson or Clay" (Crawford)		Clay		Jackson		Jackson			
		Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent
	2144	1062	50—	629	29+	343	16—	49	2+	50	2+	11	1—
<b>3<sup>d</sup> DISTRICT</b>													
Bond.....	116	74	63+	13	11+	6	5+	13	11+	10	9—	.....	.....
Fayette....	115	38	33+	65	57—	12	10+	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Fulton.....	43	27	63—	4	9+	4	9+	.....	.....	.....	.....	81	19—
Greene.....	308	85	27+	214	69+	8	3—	.....	.....	.....	.....	12	0+
Madison....	496	243	49—	198	40—	49	10—	.....	.....	5	1+	13	0+
Montgomery	39	21	54—	.....	.....	11	28+	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Morgan....	133	86	65—	21	16—	11	8+	7	18—	12	9+	.....	.....
Pike.....	200	193	97—	1	0+	.....	.....	3	2+	6	3	.....	.....
St. Clair...	400	170	42+	104	26	119	30—	6	2—	.....	.....	14	0+
Sangamon...	294	125	43—	9	3+	123	42—	20	7—	17	6—	.....	.....

<sup>1</sup> Includes seven votes for Elijah C. Berry and one for William Scott.  
<sup>2</sup> For William Berry.  
<sup>3</sup> For Jonathan Turney.  
<sup>4</sup> For Samuel Allen.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTOR—Continued  
ELECTION NOVEMBER 1, 1824  
SECOND DISTRICT

COUNTY	TOTAL	Henry Eddy		James Gray		Leonard White		Joseph M. Street		Daniel Boatright		Scattered	
		Jackson		Clay		Adams		Jackson		Jackson			
		Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent
DISTRICT	1368	596	44—	476	35—	225	16+	64	5—	6	0+	1	0+
Clark.....	19	1	5+	5	26+	13	68+	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Crawford...	172	64	37+	64	37+	43	25	.....	.....	1	1—	.....	.....
Edgar.....	97	37	38+	26	27—	34	35+	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Edwards...	192	55	29—	103	54—	29	15+	.....	.....	5	3—	.....	.....
Gallatin...	316	199	63—	41	13—	47	15—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Hamilton...	71	36	51—	25	35+	4	6—	28	9—	.....	.....	1	0+
Lawrence...	112	31	28—	65	58+	16	14+	6	8+	.....	.....	.....	.....
Wayne.....	86	62	72+	18	21—	6	7—	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
White.....	303	111	37—	129	43—	33	11—	30	10—	.....	.....	.....	.....

**PRESIDENTIAL ELECTOR—Concluded**  
ELECTION NOVEMBER 1, 1824  
THIRD DISTRICT

COUNTY	TOTAL	Alexander P. Field		Pierre Menard		William M. Alexander		William H. Bradsby		Humphrey B. Jones	
		Jackson		Adams		Crawford		Clay		Clay	
		Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent	Vote	Per cent
DISTRICT	1195	497	42—	253	21+	218	18+	193	16+	34	3—
Alexander.....	32	28	85—	3	9+	.....	.....	1	3+	.....	.....
Franklin.....	64	49	77—	1	2—	5	8—	9	14+	.....	.....
Jackson.....	98	46	47—	6	6+	7	7+	39	40—	.....	.....
Jefferson.....	73	62	85—	1	1+	1	1+	9	12+	.....	.....
Johnson.....	46	40	87—	2	4+	.....	.....	4	9—	.....	.....
Monroe.....	78	2	3—	35	45—	11	14+	30	38+	.....	.....
Pope.....	84	41	49—	11	13+	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Randolph.....	387	47	12+	149	38+	.....	.....	.....	.....	32	38+
Union.....	181	153	85—	15	8+	177	46—	12	3+	2	1—
Washington.....	152	29	19+	30	20—	3	2—	10	6—	.....	.....
						14	9+	79	52—	.....	.....

## VOTE OF ILLINOIS FOR THE PRESIDENCY

		No. of electoral votes cast
1820	James Monroe.....	3
1824	Andrew Jackson.....	2
	John Quincy Adams.....	1
1828	Andrew Jackson.....	3
1832	Andrew Jackson.....	5
1836	Martin Van Buren, Democrat.....	5
1840	Martin Van Buren, Democrat.....	5
1844	James K. Polk, Democrat.....	9
1848	Lewis Cass, Democrat.....	9
1852	Franklin Pierce, Democrat.....	11
1856	James Buchanan, Democrat.....	11
1860	Abraham Lincoln, Republican.....	11
1864	Abraham Lincoln, Union.....	16
1868	Ulysses S. Grant, Republican.....	16
1872	Ulysses S. Grant, Republican.....	21
1876	Rutherford B. Hayes, Republican.....	21
1880	James A. Garfield, Republican.....	21
1884	James G. Blaine, Republican.....	22
1888	Benjamin Harrison, Republican.....	22
1892	Grover Cleveland, Democrat.....	24
1896	William McKinley, Republican.....	24
1900	William McKinley, Republican.....	24
1904	Theodore Roosevelt, Republican.....	27
1908	William H. Taft, Republican.....	27
1912	Woodrow Wilson, Democrat.....	29
1916	Charles E. Hughes, Republican.....	29
1920	Warren G. Harding, Republican.....	29



# VOTE FOR GOVERNOR FROM 1818 TO 1920

1818

Shadrach Bond, elected without opposition.

1822

Thomas C. Browne.....	2,443
Joseph Phillips.....	2,687
James B. Moore.....	622
Edward Coles.....	2,854

1826

Ninian Edwards.....	6,280
Thomas Sloo, Jr.....	5,833
Adolphus F. Hubbard.....	580

1830

John Reynolds.....	12,837
William Kinney.....	8,938
John Tillson, Jr.....	1

1834

Joseph Duncan.....	17,330
William Kinney.....	10,224
Robert K. McLaughlin.....	4,315
James Adams.....	887
Scattering .....	15

1838

Thomas Carlin, Democrat.....	30,648
Cyrus Edwards, Whig.....	29,722

## 1842

Thomas Ford, Democrat.....	46,507
Joseph Duncan, Whig.....	39,020
Charles M. Hunter, Liberty.....	913

## 1846

Augustus C. French, Democrat.....	58,656
Thomas M. Kilpatrick, Whig.....	37,033
Richard Eels, Liberty.....	5,157

## 1848

Augustus C. French, Democrat.....	67,828
Charles V. Dyer, Free Soil.....	4,692
W. L. D. Morrison, Whig.....	5,659

## 1852

Joel A. Matteson, Democrat.....	80,789
E. B. Webb, Whig.....	64,408
D. A. Knowlton, Free Soil.....	9,024

## 1856

Wm. H. Bissell, Republican.....	111,466
Wm. A. Richardson, Democrat.....	106,679
Buckner S. Morris, American.....	19,088

## 1860

Richard Yates, Republican.....	172,196
James C. Allen, Democrat.....	159,253
J. W. Chickering, Breckenridge Democrat....	1,148
John T. Stuart, Constitutional Union.....	1,626
John Hassock.....	46
Wm. Brown.....	68
Scattering .....	17

## 1864

Richard J. Oglesby, Union.....	190,376
James C. Robinson, Democrat.....	158,701

## 1868

John M. Palmer, Republican.....	249,912
John R. Eden, Democrat.....	199,813

## 1872

Richard J. Oglesby, Republican.....	237,774
Gustave Koerner, Democrat.....	197,084
B. G. Wright, Prohibition.....	2,185

## 1876

Shelby M. Cullom, Republican.....	279,263
Lewis Steward, Democrat.....	272,465
James F. Simpson.....	181
Samuel B. Allen.....	184

## 1880

Shelby M. Cullom, Republican.....	314,565
Lyman Trumbull, Democrat.....	277,532
A. J. Streeter, Greenback.....	28,898
Uriah Copp, Jr., Prohibition.....	122

## 1884

Richard J. Oglesby, Republican.....	334,234
Carter H. Harrison, Democrat.....	319,635
Jesse Harper, Greenback.....	8,605
James B. Hobbs, Prohibition.....	10,905
Scattering .....	10

## 1888

Joseph W. Fifer, Republican.....	367,860
John M. Palmer, Democrat.....	355,313
David H. Harts, Prohibition.....	18,874
Willis W. Jones, Labor.....	6,394
Scattering .....	6

## 1892

John W. Fifer, Republican.....	402,686
John P. Altgeld, Democrat.....	425,558
Robert R. Link, Prohibition.....	24,808
Nathan M. Barnett, Peoples.....	20,103

## 1896

John P. Altgeld, Democrat.....	474,256
John R. Tanner, Republican.....	587,637
George W. Gere, Prohibition.....	14,559
Charles A. Baustian, National.....	985
Isaac W. Higgs, Socialist Labor.....	723
William S. Forman, Independent Democrat..	8,102
Scattering .....	10

## 1900

Richard Yates, Republican.....	580,199
Samuel Alschuler, Democrat.....	518,966
Visscher V. Barnes, Prohibition.....	15,643
A. C. Vantine, Peoples.....	1,106
Louis P. Hoffman, Socialist Labor.....	1,319
Herman C. Perry, Socialist Democrat.....	8,611
John Cordingly, United Christian.....	334
Lloyd G. Spencer, Union Reform.....	650

## 1904

Charles S. Deneen, Republican.....	634,029
Lawrence B. Stringer, Democrat.....	334,880

Robert H. Patton, Prohibition.....	35,440
John Collins, Socialist.....	59,062
Philip Veal, Socialist Labor.....	4,379
James Hogan, Peoples.....	4,364
Andrew G. Specht, Continental.....	780

## 1908

Charles S. Deneen, Republican.....	550,076
Adlai E. Stevenson, Democrat.....	526,912
Daniel R. Sheen, Prohibition.....	33,922
James H. Brower, Socialist.....	31,293
George W. McCaskrin, Independence.....	10,883
Gustav A. Jennings, Socialist Labor.....	1,526

## 1912

Edward F. Dunne, Democrat.....	443,120
Charles S. Deneen, Republican.....	318,469
Frank H. Funk, Progressive.....	303,401
John C. Kennedy, Socialist.....	78,679
Edwin R. Worrell, Prohibition.....	15,231
John M. Francis, Socialist Labor.....	3,980

## 1916

Edward F. Dunne, Democrat.....	556,654
Frank O. Lowden, Republican.....	696,535
Seymour Stedman, Socialist.....	52,316
John R. Golden, Prohibition.....	15,309
John M. Francis, Socialist Labor.....	1,739

## 1920

Len Small, Republican.....	1,243,148
James Hamilton Lewis, Democrat.....	731,551
Andrew Lafin, Socialist.....	58,998
James H. Woertendyke, Prohibition.....	9,876

John H. Walker, Farmer Labor.....	56,480
Lewis D. Spaulding, Single Tax.....	930
John M. Francis, Socialist Labor.....	3,020
John Maynard Harlan, Harding-Coolidge Re- publican .....	5,985
Harrison Parker, Cooperative.....	1,260
Parke Longworth, Liberal.....	357

### POPULATION OF ILLINOIS EACH CENSUS, 1790-1920

1790 .....	
1800 .....	
1810 .....	12,282
1820 .....	55,162
1830 .....	157,445
1840 .....	476,183
1850 .....	851,470
1860 .....	1,711,951
1870 .....	2,539,891
1880 .....	3,077,871
1890 .....	3,826,351
1900 .....	4,821,550
1910 .....	5,638,591
1920 .....	6,485,280



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